the weekly Standard

APRIL 5, 2004

$3.95

THE LIBERATION OF IRAQ AND THE HOLOCAUST SHRUG
DAVID GELERNTER

The Bumpy Road to Democracy in Iraq

Fred Barnes reports from Baghdad

#BXNFMVD ******AUTO**5-DIGIT 94301
#UNZ0555B096 1#302604 WK 5550
RON UNZ DEC 06 04 000031
371 000405
555 BRYANT ST 001
PALO ALTO CA 94301-1704

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Voices across America are speaking out to save local phone competition.

AARP

"[T]hese rules... protect consumers' interests and save consumers billions of dollars a year. Abandoning the FCC's rules would be tantamount to foreclosing competition for the foreseeable future."

AARP Letter to FCC Commissioners, March 8, 2004

American Farm Bureau Federation

"The need for competition remains strong because of the continuing lack of meaningful phone service alternatives in much of rural America. Wireless coverage is still developing in many rural areas and completely unavailable in others. Cable transmission is also not yet viable in rural areas."

American Farm Bureau Federation Statement, March 3, 2004

Citizens Against Government Waste

"[I]t is incumbent upon the Department of Justice to appeal the lower court's judgment. The Supreme Court, the final arbiter in this process, can provide... a clear and unambiguous interpretation of the law. [The] telecommunications industry [will then] have regulatory clarity for future growth and investment...."

Citizens Against Government Waste Release, March 10, 2004

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

"If there is one thing that we learned from the last eight years, it is that allowing more companies to compete for local as well as long distance phone service not only saves consumers billions of dollars, but also spurs investment in telecom infrastructure and creates badly needed growth and job opportunities. The decision by the court to step into the shoes of the FCC and literally re-write a bipartisan federal telecom policy is only likely to hamper recovery in the industry and hurt the cause of job creation at a time when we need it most."

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Statement, March 3, 2004

Consumer Federation of America

"In 60 days, phone bills could go up because the court has eliminated the rules which 75 percent of those offering competitive service use."

Rocky Mountain News, March 3, 2004

National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

"The consequences of the D.C. Circuit's ruling are severe, not only for the future of local telephone service, but for the ability of State agencies to cooperate with federal agencies to accomplish national goals."

National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners Release, March 8, 2004

National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates

"The court's decision... throws consumers, the industry, and regulators into a morass of uncertainty, and puts at risk the meager competitive gains in local telephone service seen by residential and small business consumers in the last two years."

National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates Release, March 2, 2004

Small Business Survival Committee

"It is unfortunate the [Appeals] Court does not understand that small business owners need the advantages that local phone competition brings. Recent studies have shown that small businesses saved over $4 billion last year alone because of competition [and] we can save $6 billion in 2004. The small business community urges the Administration to pursue this cause through to the Supreme Court."

Small Business Survival Committee Letter to President Bush, March 8, 2004

Computing Technology Industry Association - CompTIA

"Since passage of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, the FCC and state officials have successfully worked to implement rules that promote the proliferation of competitive telecommunications services. The U.S. Supreme Court has explicitly noted and approved the success of this effort [from which] consumers and businesses have saved almost $10 billion every year."

CompTIA Letter to President Bush, March 12, 2004

Small Business Association of Michigan

"The efforts of our Michigan Public Service Commission have made the difference for Michigan. The D.C. Court takes away state authority and jeopardizes the opportunity for sustainable local telephone competition here in Michigan."

Small Business Association of Michigan Letter to the FCC, March 4, 2004

Baltimore branch of the NAACP

"This ruling will raise prices for telephone and Internet services, and drive small telecommunications businesses – the ones most likely to cater to African-American communities and students – out of the marketplace."

Baltimore Sun, March 12, 2004

Arizona Corporation Commission

"The D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals' decision jeopardizes the Commission's role in continuing to oversee and implement pro-competitive policies in Arizona, based on the unique characteristics of our State and its markets. Because the decision eliminates several unbundled network elements that competitive carriers now depend on to provide service to end users, its implementation on May 3, 2004 will create a high degree of uncertainty and potential disruption in these markets in Arizona. This decision stands in stark contrast to other judicial opinions to date that have recognized the scheme of cooperative federalism underlying Sections 251 and 252 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996."

Arizona Corporation Commission Letter to President Bush, March 22, 2004

New Hampshire ISP Association

"In reversing an earlier ruling by the Federal Communications Commission, the decision issued by the U.S. Appeals Court... would not only kill local telecom competition... it would kill the authority of our New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission to protect us from monopoly abuses."

Letter to the Editor, The Union Leader, March 16, 2004

United Seniors Association

"Now, as a result of the D.C. Circuit Court's unconscionable decision, consumers, in general, and seniors, in particular, will lose all of these benefits. This is not an abstract harm. It will result in real damage to real people. Thus, the United Seniors Association urges the Administration and the Federal Communications Commission to continue to vigorously defend current market competition laws against a return to the monopoly practices of the past."

United Seniors Association Letter to President Bush, March 4, 2004

Austin American-Statesman (TX) Editorial

"[C]onsumers' choices might actually be reduced if a federal court ruling handed down last week stands.... About 15 percent of the market has switched to competitors, who should not be effectively priced out of a system that was built with the protection of a monopoly sanctioned by government and fed by profits guaranteed by government."

"In Telecom Fight, Consumers Win When There's Competition," March 8, 2004

San Jose Mercury-News (CA) Editorial

"[T]he court's misguided decision could slam the door shut on telephone competition, which had been pried open by the FCC. You could end up with fewer choices and pay higher prices for both telephone and high-speed Internet service."

"Court Rips FCC – and Competition," March 8, 2004

St. Petersburg Times (FL) Editorial

"If the ruling stands, competition for wired phone service would be dealt a damaging blow especially for residential customers."

"Competition? Sounds Phony Now," March 7, 2004

The Financial Times Editorial

"[This decision] is not such good news for American consumers or for the general state of competition in the telecommunications industry.... It hands greater power to local incumbents at a time when competition has not fully developed. The Bells still provide about 85 percent of local services."

"The Bells' Tolls," March 4, 2004

voicesforchoices

We're Voices for Choices. We believe the best way to protect America's phone system and give consumers lower prices, better service and more choices is to make the giant Bell monopolies keep the promise of the Telecommunications Act. Call 1-877-794-8600 or go to www.voicesforchoices.com for more information.

Organizations listed are not necessarily members of Voices for Choices.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

April 5, 2004 • Volume 9, Number 29

2 Scrapbook..... *Dick Clarke: Good, Bad, and Ugly.*

4 Casual ..... *Joseph Epstein, missing cum laude.*

6 Correspondence..... *On 9/11 and adolescence.*

9 Editorial ..... *The Sorry Mr. Clarke*

Articles

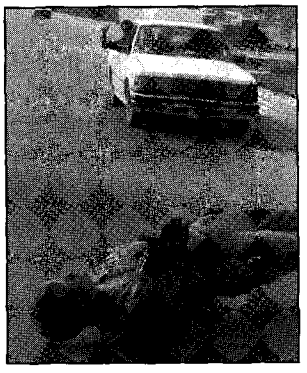
10 The Life of the Party *It's not John Kerry.* ..... BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

14 So Much for Saudi Reform *Does U.S. support for democracy extend to Riyadh?* ..... BY ALI AL AHMED

15 Gay Marriage and the Election *Polls show a winning issue for the GOP.* ..... BY MARK STRICHERZ

17 Building a Better Baby *The dark side of universal prenatal screening.* ..... BY AGNES R. HOWARD

19 No More Clash of Civilizations *Greece and Turkey make up.* ..... BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ



Cover: AFP / Patrick Baz

Features

21 The Bumpy Road to Democracy in Iraq
It's not easy recovering from generations of despotism. ..... BY FRED BARNES

24 The Holocaust Shrug
Why is there so much indifference to the liberation of Iraq? ..... BY DAVID GELERNTER

27 The Southeast Asian Front
Creeping towards Islamization in Indonesia. ..... BY PAUL MARSHALL

Books & Arts

31 Imperial America? *The paranoid tradition in European thought.* ..... BY ROGER KAPLAN

33 Leftover Glamour *The politics of women's magazines.* ..... BY NOEMIE EMERY

35 Lonigan Redux *The return of James T. Farrell.* ..... BY CORTRIGHT MCMEEL

38 Wiesel's Masters *Portraits of Jewish Sages.* ..... BY JAY D. HOMNICK

39 THE STANDARD READER ..... *Len Krisak on Harold Bloom's* The Best Poems of the English Language.

40 Parody ..... *A sneak peek at a civil servant's sequel.*

William Kristol, *Editor* **Fred Barnes,** *Executive Editor*
David Tell, *Opinion Editor* **Christopher Caldwell, Andrew Ferguson,** *Senior Editors* **Richard Starr, Claudia Winkler,** *Managing Editors*
Joseph Bottum, *Books & Arts Editor* **Matt Labash,** *Senior Writer* **Stephen F. Hayes,** *Staff Writer*
Victorino Matus, David Skinner, *Assistant Managing Editors* **Jonathan V. Last,** *Online Editor*
Katherine Mangu-Ward, *Reporter* **Matthew Continetti, Rachel DiCarlo, Erin Montgomery,** *Editorial Assistants*
Lev Nisnevitch, *Art Director* **Philip Chalk,** *Production Director*
Max Boot, Tucker Carlson, John J. DiIulio Jr., Noemie Emery, Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Reuel Marc Gerecht Brit Hume, Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, Tod Lindberg, P. J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer, *Contributing Editors*
Terry Eastland, *Publisher* **Peter Dunn,** *Advertising Director*
Nicholas H.B. Swezey, *Advertising & Marketing Manager* **Don Eugenio,** *Midwest Advertising Manager*
Lauren Trotta Husted, *Circulation Director* **Tina Winston,** *Finance Director* **Catherine Titus Lowe,** *Publicity Director*
Taybor Cook, Carolyn Wimmer, *Executive Assistants* **Michael Goldfarb,** *Staff Assistant*

the weekly Standard

THE WEEKLY STANDARD (ISSN 1083-3013) is published weekly (except the first week in January, the second week in July, the second week in August, and the second week in September) by News America Incorporated, 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Yearly subscriptions, $78.00. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-902-563-4723 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send manuscripts and letters to the editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. For a copy of THE WEEKLY STANDARD Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, THE WEEKLY STANDARD, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. THE WEEKLY STANDARD Advertising Sales Office in Washington, DC, is 1-202-293-4900. Advertising Production: Call Nicholas H.B. Swezey 1-202-496-3355. Midwest Advertising Sales: 1-312-953-7236. Copyright 2004, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in THE WEEKLY STANDARD may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. THE WEEKLY STANDARD is a trademark of News America Incorporated.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

www.weeklystandard.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dick Clarke: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

The Good . . .

As the top National Security Council staffer on counterterrorism for the last decade—and a career national security bureaucrat for the last 30 years—Richard Clarke had a ringside seat from which to view the full catastrophe of Osama bin Laden's war on America. His efforts to stir a more forceful U.S. response to al Qaeda were described in these pages two months ago by Richard H. Shultz Jr. ("Showstoppers," Jan. 26, 2004). Here is Shultz's description of the frustrations Clarke faced:

> When events finally impelled the Clinton administration to take a hard look at offensive operations, the push to pursue them came from the civilians of the National Security Council's Counterterrorism and Security Group.
>
> One of the hardest of the hard-liners was the group's chief, Dick Clarke. For nearly a decade, this career civil servant began and ended his workday with the burgeoning terrorist threat to America. He knew in detail the danger the bin Ladens of the world posed, and it worried him greatly. Defensive measures were just not enough. "Clarke's philosophy was to go get the terrorists," one former senior Pentagon special operations official told me, "Go get them anywhere you can." . . .
>
> Clarke was not alone. Mike Sheehan also pushed for assisting the Northern Alliance and striking al Qaeda with SOF [special forces]. Such measures worried the senior brass, who proceeded to weaken those officials by treating them as pariahs. That meant portraying them as cowboys, who proposed reckless military operations that would get American soldiers killed.
>
> Sheehan explained: Suppose one civilian starts beating the drum for special operations. The establishment "systematically starts to undermine you. They would say, 'He's a rogue, he's uncooperative, he's out of control, he's stupid, he makes bad choices.' It's very damaging. . . . You get to the point where you don't even raise issues like that. If someone did, like me or Clarke, we were labeled cowboys, way outside our area of competence."
>
> Several officials who served on the Joint Staff and in the Pentagon's special operations office remembered the senior brass characterizing Clarke in such terms. "Anything Dick Clarke suggested, the Joint Staff was going to be negative about," said one. Some generals had been vitriolic, calling Clarke "a madman, out of control, power hungry, wanted to be a hero, all that kind of stuff." In fact, one of these former officials emphasized, "when we would carry back from the counterterrorism group one of those SOF counterterrorism proposals, our job was to figure out not how to execute it, but how we were going to say no."
>
> By turning Clarke into a pariah, the Pentagon brass discredited precisely the options that might have spared us the tragedy of September 11. And when Clarke fought back at being branded "wild" and "irresponsible," they added "abrasive" and "intolerant" to the counts against him.

Clarke was similarly well placed in the critical first year of the Bush administration. Let's fast forward to an August 2002 press briefing unearthed last week by Fox News's Jim Angle, when Clarke was still on the Bush NSC staff. Clarke was asked about accusations that animus to the Clinton administration had made the Bush administration unwilling to take suggestions from their predecessors on going after al Qaeda:

> CLARKE: Over the course of the summer [of 2001, the Bush team] changed the strategy by authorizing the increase in funding five-fold, changing the policy on Pakistan, changing the policy on Uzbekistan, changing the policy on the Northern Alliance assistance. And then changed the strategy from one of rollback with al Qaeda over the course of five years, which it had been, to a new strategy that called for the rapid elimination of al Qaeda. That is in fact the timeline. . . .
>
> ANGLE: You're saying that the Bush administration did not stop anything that the Clinton administration was doing while it was making these decisions, and by the end of the summer had increased money for covert action five-fold. Is that correct?
>
> CLARKE: All of that's correct.

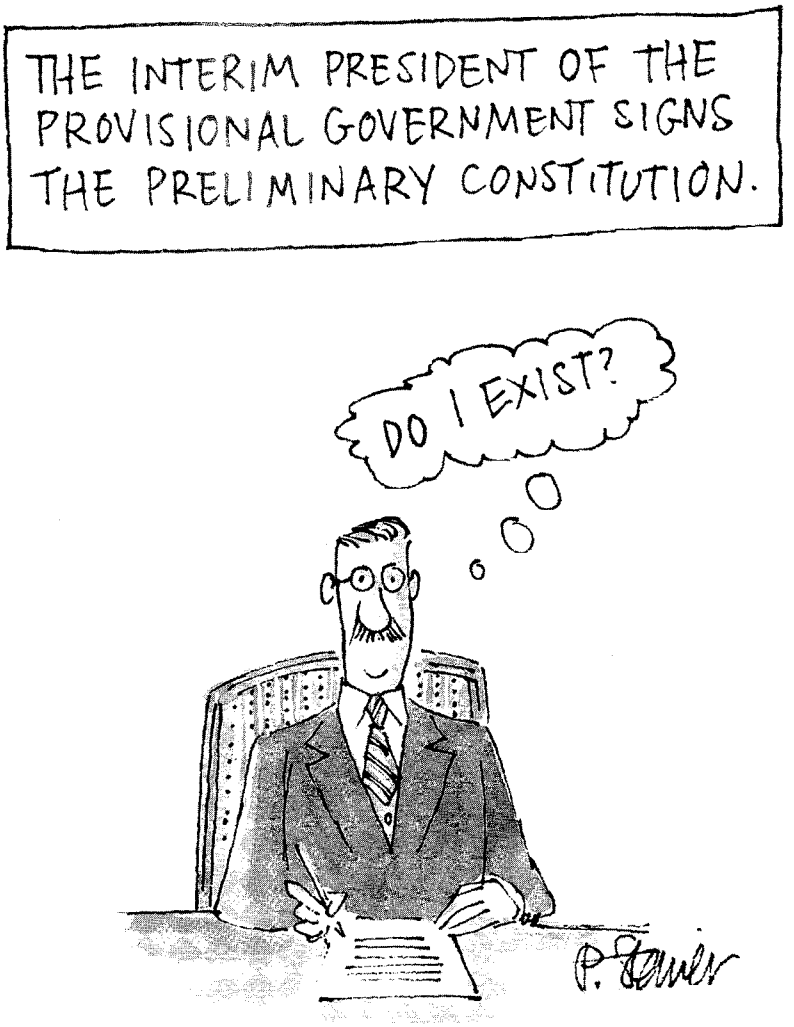
There was every reason, then, given Clarke's unique vantage point, to expect that his memoirs would one day provide an authoritative account of what went wrong (and what went right) in the long war with al Qaeda.

The Bad . . .

The appearance of Clarke's *Against All Enemies* last week betrayed those expectations. First, the simple fact that Clarke, who resigned in January 2003, should rush to publish his volume before the end of Bush's first term is a precedent-setting act of bad faith from a National Security Council staffer who reports on conversations with the president and his national security adviser.

It's no surprise that the Washington press corps hasn't lingered over this breach of trust. They were no doubt the recipients of so many leaks from Clarke through the years that it would be an act of deep ingratitude for them to criticize the man now. It's a bit shortsighted of alleged defenders of good government (viz. the *New York Times* editorial page)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



not to notice the fact that Clarke has singlehandedly all but guaranteed a partisan purge of national security staff in future transitions.

And the Ugly

But the real disappointment is that whole chunks of Clarke's book sound as if they were dictated by Sidney Blumenthal, the most partisan and conspiratorial of the Clintonites. When Clarke says in his preface that he will tell the story of "Bill Clinton, who identified terrorism as the major post-Cold War threat and acted to improve our counterterrorism capabilities; who (little known to the public) quelled anti-American terrorism by Iraq and Iran and defeated an al Qaeda attempt to dominate Bosnia; but who, weakened by continued political attack, could not get the CIA, the Pentagon, and FBI to act sufficiently to deal with the threat"—he is echoing the thesis of Blumenthal, whose tedious 2003 memoir *The Clinton Wars* blamed all of Clinton's failures in combatting al Qaeda on Clinton's political foes. Both books tell some of the same supposedly Clinton-exculpating anecdotes:

> What was particularly frustrating was that Clinton had pulled Joint Staffs Chairman Hugh Shelton and me aside after the Cabinet Room meeting, saying to the former Special Forces commander, "Hugh, what I think would scare the shit out of these al Qaeda guys, more than any cruise missile . . . would be the sight of U.S. commandoes, Ninja guys in black suits, jumping out of helicopters into their camps, spraying machine guns. Even if we don't get the big guys, it will have a good effect." Shelton looked pained. He explained that the camps were a long way away from anywhere we could launch a helicopter raid. Nonetheless, America's top military officer agreed to "look into it." (Clarke, *Against All Enemies*, pp. 189-190)

Still frustrated, President Clinton tried to get the Pentagon to think about a Special Forces operation. In late 1999, he suggested to [Joint Chiefs Chairman Hugh] Shelton, "You know, it would scare the shit out of al Qaeda if suddenly a bunch of black ninjas rappelled out of helicopters into the middle of their camp. It would get us enormous deterrence and show those guys we're not afraid." But Shelton "blanched": The generals subsequently argued to the NSC that a small operation was too risky: "The White House had little recourse; it would not work to order the military to undertake a mission it believed to be suicidal." (Blumenthal, *The Clinton Wars*, p. 661)

Then there's the condescending character assassination (also a Blumenthalian touch): "As I briefed [National Security Adviser Condi Rice] on al Qaeda, her facial expression gave me the impression that she had never heard of the term before." (She had in fact heard of and used the term.) Clarke's new fans on the Bush-bashing left preposterously demand that his book deserves serious rebuttal. Fine. To paraphrase Clarke: As we read his book, he gives us the impression that he is as obsessed with destroying the Bush presidency as he once was with destroying al Qaeda. Too bad. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Casual

Let Old Acquaintance Be Forgot

I recently received an invitation to my fiftieth-year high school reunion, and am impressed with how little interested I am in attending it. For many people, their adolescence was an awkward, painful, really hellacious time. Mine, on the contrary, was so pleasing that I sometimes think that I peaked in my seventeenth year. Nearly every day I went to high school the way aging brides go to their weddings: filled with feelings of contentment, success, and anticipation. Yet I have decided to take a pass on this, my fiftieth reunion. I feel, somehow, that it is best I not return, as the announcer for the *Lone Ranger* radio show had it, "to those thrilling days of yesteryear."

In some ways, a fiftieth class reunion ought to be easier than a tenth or a twenty-fifth. At these earlier reunions, all the cards have not yet been dealt. One can appear still to have a good shot at mastering life; one can brag a bit about one's children's extraordinary accomplishments, one's own bright future. You can try to make the case that you have become a much deeper person than the rather shallow character everyone remembers roaming the halls of high school.

I attended a thirtieth-year class reunion, to which I had looked forward. My reigning memory is of a very noisy band that seemed, for much of the evening, to be playing a hideous rendition of "New York, New York"—and this in Chicago—with the bandleader singing the words at a decibel level slightly above that of the response of a man who has just been pushed off a cliff. I recall regretting that I hadn't been financially more successful than I was, so that I might give the band a couple of grand to pack up its instruments and depart the hall instanter.

Thirty years out, too, I could see the ravages that time had begun to make on my old classmates. More than a few heartbreaking toupees were on display. A number of people seemed to have widened considerably, as if someone had fooled with their horizontal button. Outcroppings of gray and even some white hair were showing forth. We were, as a class, not 50 years old, so there were not then a great many people taken out of the game by death. Lots of divorces, though; and a few people had had bouts with cancer to report.

Darren Gygi

What I noticed more than anything was that most people were not much different than they had been at eighteen—they were their old selves, only, somehow, more so. The vain were vainer; the funny, funnier, the dopey, dopier; the slightly crazed now well along to madness. The most impressive success in the room was a man, a peripheral figure when in high school, who owned a national chain of sporting-goods stores. Two class clowns, apparently having gotten serious, turned out to be physicians. Some, prominent when kids, didn't show up at all, leaving one to wonder if the defeats dealt them by life were too obvious to be displayed at a reunion. Twenty more years have now surreptitiously slipped by. Things cannot have gotten better for most of my classmates.

I have, I think, an inkling of what it would be like to see them all assembled in their aged state. Several weeks ago, while giving a talk in Chicago, I noticed a face in the audience from high school days. "My God," I thought, "who put the white hair and white mustache on Dick Karlov?" Take my reaction and multiply it by a few hundred: That's what it would be like to attend my reunion.

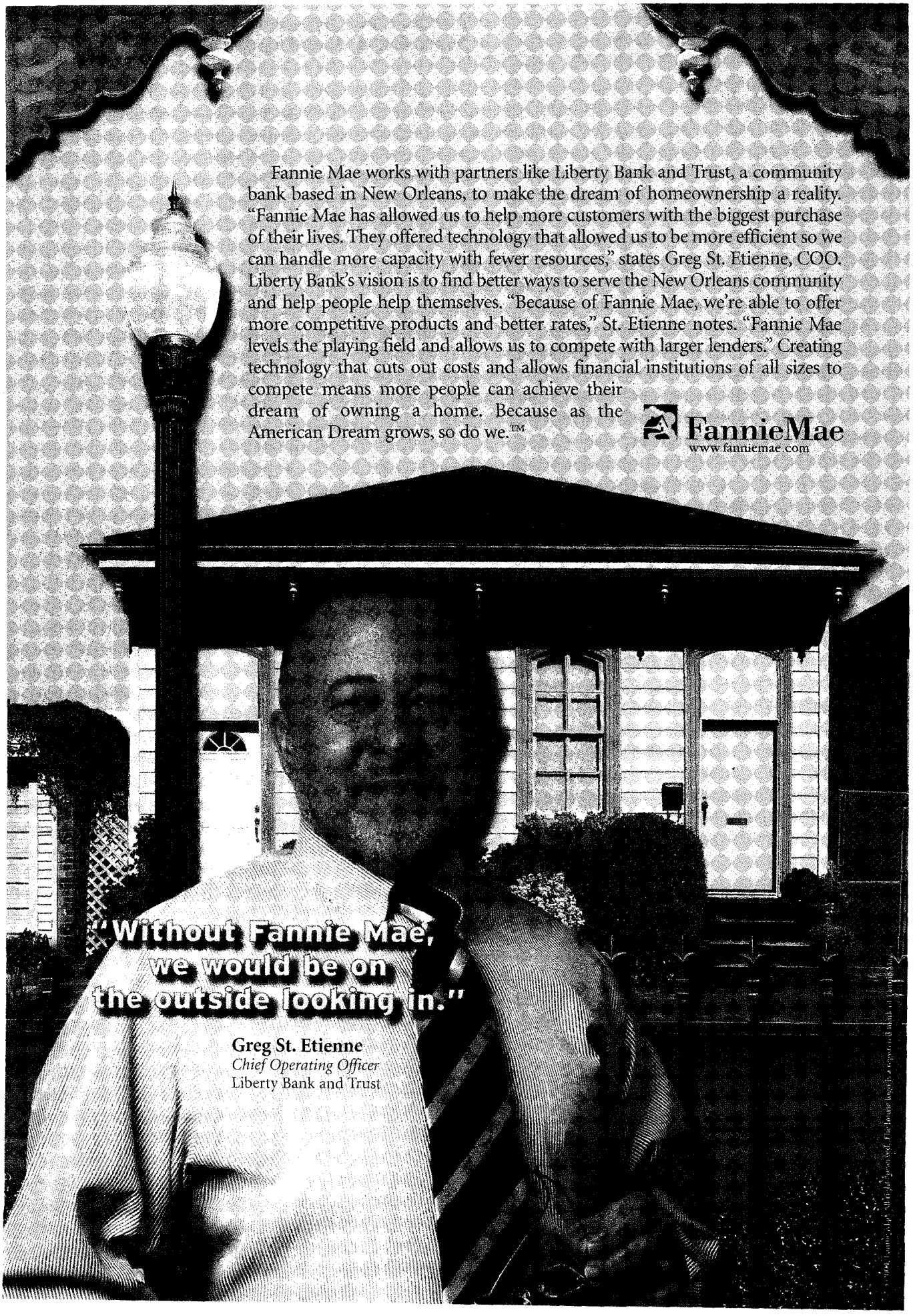
"For a few seconds I did not understand why it was that I had difficulty in recognizing the master of the house and the guests and why everyone in the room appeared to have put on a disguise—in most cases a powdered wig—which changed him completely," Proust, in his great novel, has his agent Marcel observe. Marcel goes on to remark that, in his mind, the men at this party were not old men, but were "young men in an advanced state of withering." Too true. "Time," Marcel remarks, "which changes human beings does not alter the image we have of them. Indeed nothing is more painful than the contrast between the mutability of people and the fixity of memory, when it is borne in upon us that what has been preserved with so much freshness in our memory can no longer possess any trace of that quality in life. . . ."

I can face the fact that we all grow older, but I prefer to face it only one or two persons at a time. A large room filled with people in this condition is more than I can handle. That is why I shan't be attending my fiftieth-year class reunion.

If the announcement of the reunion had asked for a reason for not attending, I would have replied: "See Proust, *Time Regained*, pp. 957-1157, *passim*. C. Scott-Moncrieff, Terence Kilmartin and Andreas Mayor translation. Random House. Best wishes, J.E."

Joseph Epstein

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Exploitation Flick

Matthew Continetti's suggestion that September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows "staged a controversy" over the president's use of 9/11 imagery in his political ads is at odds with reality ("How to Stage a Controversy," March 22).

A recent *USA Today* poll showed that 66 percent of Americans agree with our position that it is inappropriate for political candidates to run campaign ads that use images depicting the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Instead of staging its own disingenuous "controversy" over the longstanding public goals of our advocacy group, The Weekly Standard might better serve its readers by exploring the very real rejection by a majority of the public to the use of 9/11 images by political candidates of both parties.

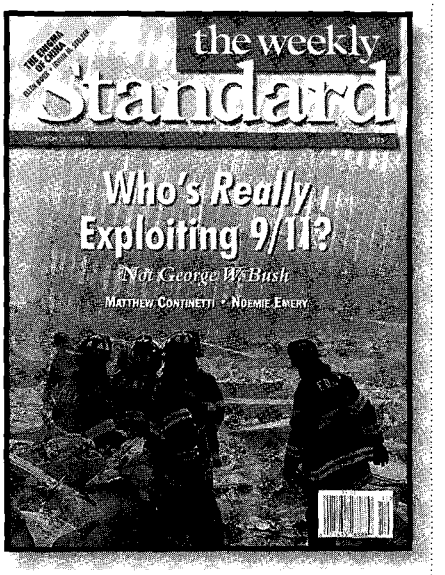
David Potorti
September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows
Cary, NC

In his eagerness to portray the Institute for Public Accuracy as the main catalyst for news about criticisms of how the Bush-Cheney campaign has used 9/11 in its TV commercials, Matthew Continetti was overly generous with his backhanded praise. Our small staff may be, as he wrote, a "group of people with excellent public relations skills," but only an outsized institutional ego would allow us to take most of the credit for encouraging media coverage of the issue in early March.

Indeed, Continetti's description of the IPA as having "a political axe to grind" is no more true of our organization than of, say, the Heritage Foundation. One of the differences, however—along with our relatively tiny budget and the fact that we've never helped write legislation on Capitol Hill—is that our mission involves helping to widen public discourse rather than further corporatizing and militarizing it. With more than 700 news releases since April 1998, we've worked to promote an array of progressive voices. Archived without revisions at *www.accuracy.org*, almost all of those news releases stand the test of time.

While the article noted in passing that IPA news releases scrutinized President Clinton during the 1999 war on Yugoslavia, the piece did not mention that the IPA has been consistently nonpartisan. This year our news releases have debunked factual misstatements and policy formulations by politicians including Howard Dean, John Edwards, and John Kerry.

The lengthy article's conclusion—referring to "the Institute for Public Accuracy and the phony 'controversy' it managed to generate over the Bush campaign's first round of television ads"—is incorrect on two counts. IPA's news release on March 4 did not "generate" the controversy, which erupted due to many people's genuine responses to the commercials. And the controversy was



"phony" only if we believe that the heartfelt reactions from some loved ones of 9/11 victims are less equal than others.

Norman Solomon
Institute for Public Accuracy
San Francisco, CA

Matthew Continetti's excellent reporting elucidates the problems with the United States's uncritical, left-leaning media. For example, why has no journalist questioned whether Senator Kerry, by mentioning his service in Vietnam at every campaign appearance, is "exploiting" that war and the many families who lost loved ones in it? Clearly Vietnam, like 9/11, is a sensitive, painful chapter in our country's history. So why aren't journalists asking questions about Kerry's Vietnam War exploitation? Maybe because the Institute for Public Accuracy hasn't sent them a press release on the subject yet.

Bernard Mulligan
Providence, RI

Three cheers for Matthew Continetti's "How To Stage a Controversy." Such articles make clear that the events of September 11, 2001, do not belong solely to the relatives of those who perished that day. They belong to all of us.

Abe Novick
Baltimore, MD

Teen Dream

Joseph Epstein's "The Perpetual Adolescent" (March 15) does an excellent job of pointing out the negative aspects of our contemporary youth culture. Yet I found it troubling that Epstein failed to describe an intermediary between a "patience that often looks more like passivity" and the "adolescent impatience" he characterized as selfish. Thus, one must believe that no matter what steps today's youth take in educational or employment opportunities, they are not on the path to "genuine accomplishment."

Why is this so? It's apparent that Epstein uses an "old model of ambition" that emphasizes delayed gratification and the idea that success must take a lifetime to achieve. What Epstein describes as "adolescent" is nothing but a new model of ambition and achievement.

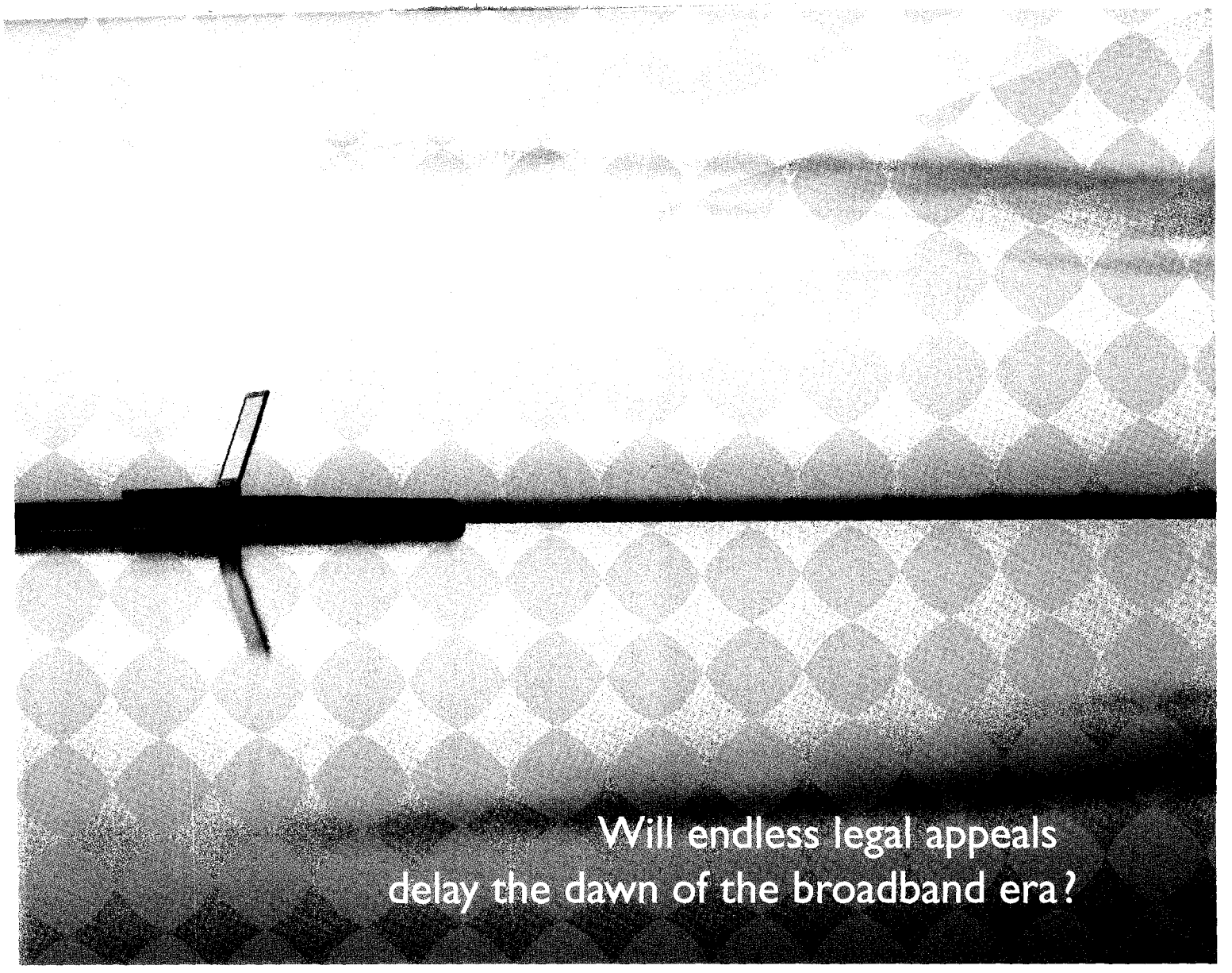
Eric Oelrich
Collegeville, MN

• • •

The Weekly Standard
welcomes letters to the editor.
All letters should be addressed:
Correspondence Editor
The Weekly Standard
1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505
Washington, DC 20036.

You may also fax letters: (202) 293-4901
or email: editor@weeklystandard.com.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



America stands on the threshold of another revolution.

The power of super-fast, broadband connections – anywhere, anytime – is virtually within our reach.

A fresh new regulatory approach for broadband adopted by the FCC has brought America to the dawn of a new era of advanced communications.

Verizon has already begun to build the broadband networks, both fiber-optic and wireless, that will lead America into this exciting new era.

Some companies seem threatened by the competition and rapid innovation these revolutionary new networks will ignite. They seem to fear a world without the subsidies and heavy regulation they benefit from today.

Continued legal challenges defending the rejected subsidies and regulation of telecom's past must not be allowed to cloud America's broadband future.

For the jobs it will bring, for the families it will bring closer together, and for the global leadership it will bring back to America, it is time to embrace the new broadband world – and lead it.

verizon

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Quality

ETS was born of a commitment to learners. We believe that good teachers produce good students. ETS is committed to the goal of having every child in America taught by a well-trained, well-qualified and well-compensated teacher.

We're working toward that quality with programs that help teachers improve their skills and administrators improve their schools. We provide the licensing exams for nearly every state in the nation to make sure teachers meet state standards.

Helping teachers teach, students learn and parents measure the progress of their children is what ETS does. It is all part of a commitment of more than fifty years: A commitment to research, collaboration and innovation. A non-profit organization dedicated to a single mission…advancing learning worldwide.

We are ETS. Listening. Learning. Leading. Helping prepare each new generation for whatever the future may hold.

Listening. Learning. Leading.

www.ets.org EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE

ETS®

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

The Sorry Mr. Clarke

"I also welcome the hearings because it is finally a forum where I can apologize to the loved ones of the victims of 9/11. To them who are here in the room, to those who are watching on television, your government failed you, those entrusted with protecting you failed you, and I failed you. We tried hard, but that doesn't matter because we failed. And for that failure, I would ask—once all the facts are out—for your understanding and for your forgiveness."

—Richard Clarke, testifying before the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, March 24, 2004

Richard Clarke can apologize to anyone he likes. He could have done so sooner. And he could have done so privately. The names of those killed on 9/11—and, for that matter, of those killed by al Qaeda in our African embassies, on the USS *Cole*, and on other occasions—have presumably been available to Clarke. Would the families of those who died have appreciated a personal letter from Clarke asking for their understanding and forgiveness? Perhaps a few would. The vast majority no doubt would have thought such an apology utterly unnecessary and inappropriate.

Clarke, who worked tirelessly against al Qaeda during the 1990s, is not responsible for the deaths on 9/11. Indeed, the families of those who died surely appreciate Clarke's great efforts, first to thwart al Qaeda, and then to bring the killers of their loved ones to justice. Surely they know of Clarke's sympathy for their loss. Surely the only apology that is owed—though it would presumably be rejected by the families—would be an apology from Osama bin Laden, just prior to his execution.

But Clarke's grandstanding did please its true intended audience. The writers at the *New York Times* loved it. After all, when Clarke apologized, they wrote, "it suddenly seemed that after the billions of words uttered about that terrible day, Mr. Clarke had found the ones that still needed saying." Indeed, "the only problem with his apology was that so few of those failures really seemed to be his." So presumably, according to the *New York Times*, everyone else in government who "failed" should also apologize.

No. In fact, what government officials owed the memory of those who died on 9/11—to ensure that they did not die in vain—was a greater determination to prosecute the war on terror than had been shown in the preceding eight months, and in the preceding eight years.

Clarke and the *New York Times* are certainly free to argue that the Bush administration has not done a good job in fighting the war on terror. They are free to argue that the war in Iraq was a mistake. But neither Clarke nor the *New York Times* has even attempted to make the case that the Bush administration bears any true moral responsibility for failing to avert al Qaeda's attack on 9/11. Shouldn't the *New York Times* trouble itself to make this case before it presumes to call for yet more inappropriate apologies?

Was no one at the *Times* aware of the following exchange between Clarke and commission member Slade Gorton?

GORTON: Now, since my yellow light is on, at this point my final question will be this: Assuming that the recommendations that you made on January 25th of 2001, based on Delenda, based on Blue Sky, including aid to the Northern Alliance, which had been an agenda item at this point for two and a half years without any action, assuming that there had been more Predator reconnaissance missions, assuming that that had all been adopted say on January 26th, year 2001, is there the remotest chance that it would have prevented 9/11?

CLARKE: No.

There have been occasions in the past when government officials properly took responsibility for actions under their direction that went terribly awry. Janet Reno accepted responsibility for the deaths in Waco in 1993. John Kennedy took responsibility for the Bay of Pigs in 1961. In those cases, apparently reckless U.S. government actions directly caused unnecessary deaths. On September 11, 2001, al Qaeda killed 3,000 Americans. It would be no more appropriate for President Bush to apologize today than it would have been for President Roosevelt to apologize for Pearl Harbor. Richard Clarke's pseudo-apology has cheapened the public discourse.

—*William Kristol*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Life of the Party

It's not John Kerry.

BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

"DEMOCRATS ROCK! Can you feel it?" hollers Michigan senator Debbie Stabenow. It is sometime after 7:00 P.M. on March 25, and Stabenow is onstage at the National Building Museum in downtown Washington, D.C., addressing countless tables of Democratic donors and politicians, who are half-listening to her as they drink wine, sip iced tea, and eat catered barbecue. There are over 1,500 people in all. Stabenow takes a deep breath. "Isn't this just wonderful to see everyone coming together?"

Certainly it's impressive. From the print media's perch on the museum's balcony, some 50 feet above and at least 100 feet away from the stage, it is hard to make out the details of Stabenow's face. But the bird's-eye view has its advantages. Sitting high above the crowd, one can identify the type of wine Hillary Clinton is drinking (red), count the number of Sikhs in attendance (one), and watch what Bill Clinton does while Al Gore is speaking (read over the remarks he himself is about to deliver).

Once the old Pension Office, the National Building Museum is a massive, cavernous space that resembles nothing so much as a cross between Notre Dame cathedral and a Boeing air hangar. It is over 100 years old. Its football-field-length interior and immense Corinthian columns (some of the tallest in the world) are awe-inspiring. More important, the museum is vast enough to hold all the egos gathered here tonight.

Reuters / Jason Reed

Kerry, Clinton, and Carter

Terry McAuliffe, chairman of the Democratic National Committee and organizer of the event, is here. Also, Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry is here. Al Gore is here. The man Gore endorsed for the presidency in December, Howard Dean, is here. As is Al Sharpton, who must have assumed (incorrectly) that the event was black tie, because he is dressed like the waiters. Sharpton and Dean's fellow failed Democratic candidates—John Edwards, Joe Lieberman, Gen. Wesley Clark, Dick Gephardt, and Bob Graham—are here too. As is Tom Daschle. And Nancy Pelosi. And Joe Biden. And Ted Kennedy. And Jimmy Carter.

They are all here to celebrate "Democrats United 2004," the centerpiece of McAuliffe's "Democratic Unity Day," a series of events meant to showcase the party's determination to defeat George W. Bush in November. The day began early Thursday afternoon, when McAuliffe and Daschle led reporters around the party's newly refurbished headquarters on Capitol Hill. And it will end sometime Friday morning, when "Something New Part II," the after-party, concludes, and the last young Democrat stumbles out of Dream nightclub in Northeast D.C., having consumed one "Donketini" too many.

Yet how unified *are* the Democrats? It's a question worth asking. Congressman Dennis Kucinich, after all, was purposely not invited to tonight's event, as he has refused to end his presidential campaign until at least the Democratic convention in July. And Zell Miller, Georgia's conservative Democratic senator, is also conspicuously absent, having

Matthew Continetti is an editorial assistant at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Send Them A Message

Buying political influence has never been more cost-effective.

The capitol's most influential journal of opinion, *The Weekly Standard,* goes daily this summer, covering both the Democratic and Republican national conventions with three special issues.

On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of each convention week, we'll deliver 15,000 copies of *The Daily Standard* to delegates' hotels, to the main convention areas, to the media workrooms, and to the exclusive events and parties.

For advertisers, we offer one package of 10 insertions, including:

- A page in both "Special Convention Preview" issues of *The Weekly Standard;*
- One page in each of the three issues of *The Daily Standard* to be distributed at the Democratic and Republican Conventions, for a total of 6 pages;
- A page in both "Special Post-Convention Review" issues; and
- Three guaranteed cover positions for each advertiser.

Your advertising dollar has never gone farther.
For one price, you can reach politically informed and active convention-goers in both parties.

So influence the politically influential.
Advertise in *The Daily Standard.*

Space reservations deadline: July 14, 2004

Artwork deadline: July 21, 2004

For further information, please call Peter Dunn or Nick Swezey at 202-293-4900 or Don Eugenio at (312) 953-7236.

the weekly Standard

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

announced on Wednesday his leadership of "Democrats for Bush." A potential problem for Democrats is that, however different the two may be ideologically, both Kucinich and Miller have constituencies.

On the other hand, those constituencies appear to be shrinking. It's no exaggeration to say that the Democratic party now assembled behind John Kerry is more unified than it has been in almost 20 years. Polling evidence confirms this. In mid-March, a CBS/*New York Times* poll gauged support for each party's presidential candidate among registered Republicans and Democrats. It showed that when you ask Democrats whether they will definitely vote for John Kerry this fall, 80 percent say yes.

Such early support hasn't always been the case. In late March 1992, CBS and the *Times* asked registered Democrats whether they would definitely vote for Bill Clinton, the likely nominee, that November. Only 66 percent said yes. And when *Time* magazine and the Yankelovich polling firm asked a similar question in the spring of 1988, 76 percent of registered Democrats said they would definitely vote for Michael Dukakis.

"I think the Democrats are united," says Dick Morris, a former Clinton adviser. "They're 100 percent committed to driving their car off the cliff." Morris's concern is that Democrats are unified not so much by a strong leader or a powerful message as by a visceral hatred of George W. Bush. And Bush hatred, Morris argues, won't appeal to swing voters in a presidential election. "It's almost a crankiness rather than an actual position," he says. If Morris is right, Kerry's problem won't be dissension from within his own party. It will be his inability to capture the undecided.

What is most interesting about the idea of Democratic "unity" isn't that it exists. It is how quickly the idea has traveled from opinion leaders to rank and file Democrats. Consider the week of March 6. On that day, *Wall Street Journal* columnist Al Hunt said this is "the most unified Democratic party since 1964." The following day, David Yepsen, the *Des Moines Register*'s veteran political reporter, announced that John Kerry's ascendancy during the primaries had "resulted in a unified Democratic party." And three days later, when the *Los Angeles Times* interviewed Barb Marsh for a "man on the street" interview, Marsh said, "Democrats are closer and more unified than we've been in a long time."

Spotlighting party unity was one purpose of the "Democrats United" dinner. But there were several others. First, the dinner helped glorify Terry McAuliffe's stewardship of the Democratic party. Since the Clintons installed him as party chair in 2001, McAuliffe has come under criticism from people inside and outside the DNC. The Democrats' electoral record on his watch hasn't helped. (McAuliffe had the dubious honor of chairing the party through the disastrous 2002 midterm elections, as well as the 2003 California recall vote.) There has been talk from the Kerry campaign of limiting McAuliffe's role in the coming months to fundraising, and naming someone else "general chairman" to act as Kerry's surrogate.

The evening signaled Howard Dean's gradual transition from renegade presidential candidate to Democratic party insider. Last fall, Dean labeled Washington politicians, Democrats included, "cockroaches."

But there wasn't any such talk at the unity dinner. Instead, there was a lot of praise for McAuliffe's accomplishments. These include the new, "high tech" headquarters, a small-donor base of 2 million people, and a voter file with 160 million names. What's more, McAuliffe told the crowd, the DNC is, for the first time in its history, free of debt. McAuliffe has taken the party from $18 million in the red to $25 million in the black. And the unity dinner alone will rake in more than $11 million in one night—the largest Democratic fundraiser in history.

Second, the evening signaled Howard Dean's gradual transition from renegade presidential candidate to Democratic party insider. Last fall, Dean labeled Washington politicians, Democrats included, "cockroaches." Now he finds himself cast as Kafka's Gregor Samsa, transformed into a cockroach overnight. The party is courting him and his supporters, afraid they will abandon Kerry in November. So, on Thursday morning, Dean endorsed Kerry at an event at George Washington University. The event was hyped for a reason. Ruy Teixeira, a fellow at the liberal Center for American Progress and the coauthor, with John Judis, of *The Emerging Democratic Majority*, says that possibly the most significant division within the party is between Dean supporters and the establishment: "There's this sense in the party that you want Dean to help mobilize those people he energized in the primaries and keep them in the party and, of course, outflank Ralph Nader."

The third function of the unity dinner was to relaunch John Kerry's presidential campaign. Kerry had spent the previous week in Ketchum, Idaho, snowboarding and reading Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Oprah's current book club selection. Politically, it had not been a good week. Kerry was lampooned for having claimed that more foreign leaders supported his presidential campaign than George Bush's. Yet the only foreign leaders who had gone on record with their support were North Koreans and the anti-Semitic

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

former prime minister of Malaysia. Members of Kerry's staff were dispatched to distance their candidate from these endorsements. Kerry's other misstep was to point out that he "actually did vote for the $87 billion" appropriation for reconstruction in Afghanistan and Iraq last fall "before I voted against it." While true (Kerry voted for a resolution he cosponsored with Joe Biden that would have paid for the appropriation by rolling back a portion of the Bush tax cuts), the utterance only helped the Bush campaign's effort to label Kerry a political opportunist. The candidate needed a break.

He's come back tanned and relaxed. On Thursday night, Kerry sits still most of the time, watching the various speeches attentively. When his turn comes, he is gracious to his former opponents and vociferous in his criticism of Bush, who has, he says, spoiled the American economy and made Americans less safe than they were in the 1990s. It's a tough speech, meant to fill what has been seen as a hole in the Kerry campaign. As Dee Dee Myers, President Clinton's former press secretary, told me, Kerry's camp has proven he can play good defense. But, she said, "They also need good offense."

Another thing Kerry's campaign needs, judging from the reaction at the unity dinner, is Bill Clinton. When the former president is introduced, the scene turns into a rock concert. Fleetwood Mac's "Don't Stop" blares from the speakers. Democratic doyennes get on their feet and clap their hands. Screams and catcalls sound from the rafters. Clinton speaks the longest, of course. He's interrupted by applause countless times. The crux of his address is that Republicans are masters of manipulation: In order to win elections, he says, "they have to get people to stop thinking. And they're real good at that." When they are not applauding Clinton, the crowd sits in rapt attention, mesmerized. So do members of the press. It's not hard to see that the people assembled in the National Building Museum would give anything to have the man run for president. Again.

It's not hard to see this because of what happens after the speeches have concluded. A gaggle of donors surrounds John Kerry. Yet, watching from the balcony, one notices that the Massachusetts senator is not the most popular man in the room. For a larger, expanding crowd is spiraling outwards from Clinton. He is being mobbed, almost clawed at, by people asking for photographs and signatures and hugs. It's an astonishing sight, and brings home a simple truth. John Kerry may be the Democratic nominee. But it is still Bill Clinton's party. ♦

How would you live
Without ENERGY?
www.energyadvocates.org
Truth about the Energy Industry and its effects on you.
Go online to learn more and sign the Declaration of Energy Independence.
www.energyadvocates.org
ENERGYADVOCATES

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

So Much for Saudi Reform

Does U.S. support for democracy in the Middle East extend to Riyadh? BY ALI AL AHMED

ON FRIDAY, MARCH 19, President Bush reiterated his commitment "to encourage reform and democracy in the greater Middle East as the alternatives to fanaticism, resentment, and terror." Anyone following the American media lately might actually believe that this policy is showing signs of success in Saudi Arabia. In the last six months, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and a host of other papers have carried articles claiming that the Saudi kingdom is liberalizing. On March 18, NPR's *All Things Considered* added its voice to the pro-Saudi chorus. In a story typical of its kind, veteran reporter Mike Shuster asserted that the Saudi religious establishment had lost power to reformers. In addition, Shuster suggested that next fall the kingdom would hold elections in which women might participate.

This glowing discussion of Saudi reform failed to mention one unpleasant fact: Two days before, the Saudi authorities had arrested 12 prominent reformers, charging them with "endangering the unity of the country." One of the detained men, the respected intellectual Abd al-Kareem Al-Juhaiman, is almost 90 years old. Another, Mohamed Saeed Tayeb, is one of the leaders of the Saudi democracy movement. The U.S. consul general in Jeddah, Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley, on at least two occasions tacitly recognized Tayeb's stature by attending the weekly political salon held at his home.

Ali al Ahmed is director of the Saudi Institute in Washington, D.C.

The producers of National Public Radio are not the only ones turning a blind eye to the anti-reform activities of the Saudi government. Secretary of State Colin Powell, in a Riyadh press conference with his Saudi counterpart on March 19, downplayed the arrests. Powell expressed concern, but stressed the strong U.S.-Saudi bond, calling the two countries "united in the war against terror." This nonchalant attitude shocked many Saudis who—given President Bush's commitment to democracy in the Middle East—had expected an American call for the release of the detainees.

In a Riyadh press conference with his Saudi counterpart, Secretary of State Colin Powell downplayed the arrests. Powell expressed concern, but stressed the strong U.S.-Saudi bond. This nonchalant attitude shocked many Saudis.

The arrest of these reformers casts serious doubt on the claim of the Saudi government that it will stick to its promise and hold elections in the country's 13 administrative regions in October 2004. With little over six months to go, there is no concrete evidence that the Saudis actually mean business. The authorities have not made any preparations for the elections: They have not formed an election commission, registered voters, or written an election law. Saudi officials cannot even agree on which branch of the government will oversee the elections.

Against this background of administrative ambiguity, the rumor mill among the Saudi opposition attests to the hostility of senior members of the ruling family toward elections. For instance, on December 28, 2003, interior minister Nayef bin Abdel Aziz privately coached a Saudi delegation headed to the United States on what to say to the American media. Two members of the delegation told me separately that, in the course of the meeting, Prince Nayef scoffed at the elections, stating, "We can hold elections and fake them like other Arab countries."

On Sunday, March 21, minister of defense Sultan bin Abdel Aziz said Saudi Arabia is not yet ready for an elected parliament because voters may pick illiterate and unqualified candidates. In November 2003, he reportedly told close associates at another private meeting that all the talk of reform was simply smoke and mirrors designed to keep the Americans off the royal family's back until the storm passes by.

In an interview with a Saudi newspaper in February, Hamoud Al Bader, secretary of the Consultative Council (a powerless 120-member body appointed by the king), denied that the council has jurisdiction over women's participation in elections.

It is easy to pass off statements like these as mere gossip spread by the Saudi opposition. The problem is that this "gossip" conforms much better to reality than do the reports being issued by credible organizations such as NPR.

If the attitude of the royal family toward reform is difficult to determine with certainty, the hostility of senior government clerics to elections is a matter of public record.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For instance, Sheikh Saleh al Fawzan said in October that elections are a Western innovation that contravenes the basic tenets of Islam. Al Fawzan is not only a member of the Senior Council of Clerics, but also an author of the Saudi religious curriculum. How is the royal family going to blunt this kind of opposition from the religious establishment?

If by some miracle elections are held this year, it is clear that, as Prince Nayef reportedly said, they will be all but meaningless. To begin with, the government plans to hold popular elections for only 50 percent of the seats on the regional councils. Giving the people a partial say in the collection of garbage and the maintenance of sewers is something short of full-fledged national democracy. Moreover, as long as the secret police remain in control of the other half of the seats, the popular vote will remain a sham. And if the police can arrest reformers for such nebulous crimes as "endangering the unity of the country," then even a regional government chosen entirely by popular vote would remain under the thumb of the royal family.

The notion that women will take part in the elections is also laughable. How can women vote if they cannot be identified? To date, more than 90 percent of the women in Saudi Arabia carry no form of identification. Although the government announced the issuing of ID cards to women last year, only a few cities followed through. The female portion of the population will not be allowed to participate in the elections.

We shouldn't be fooled by conciliatory statements emanating from the Saudi establishment. Actions speak louder than words, and it is obvious to any seasoned observer of Saudi affairs that the reform movement to date has been little more than talk. It is to be hoped that President Bush will know better than to base his plans for democracy in the area on the Saudi model. ♦

Gay Marriage and the Election

The media won't mention it, but polls show a winning issue for the GOP. BY MARK STRICHERZ

BILL CAIN is a classic New Deal Democrat. Eighty years old, Cain grew up and lives in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, an old steel town about 30 miles southeast of Pittsburgh. He graduated from Greensburg High, was drafted into the Marines during World War II, and supported his wife and six kids on the wages of a factory worker.

One recent afternoon, Cain was running errands on Euclid Avenue in a working-class section of town. Dressed in blue jeans and a tan jacket, he was holding in his left hand a broom and in his right hand a plastic lawn chair. In a deep voice reminiscent of actor Bob Mitchum, he said, "I've been a Democrat all my life." After voting twice for Clinton, in 2000, he went for George W. Bush. A frequent mass-goer at the Blessed Sacrament Cathedral downtown, Cain supports the president's conservative stand on social issues such as abortion.

Indeed, Cain said his vote will be cast not on the economy or the war in Iraq. Rather, it'll be based on gay marriage. "I'm not bigoted, but the whole damn thing is that the good Lord didn't mean marriage to be for this sort of thing. He wanted marriage to be between one man and one woman, so they could procreate."

Judging by the media's recent coverage of homosexual marriage, you would never guess that many swing voters feel the same. Reporters and pundits widely assume the only groups who oppose gay marriage are Republicans and evangelicals. Therefore, President Bush's decision to support a constitutional amendment to affirm the traditional definition of marriage is "playing to the base." Everyone else, according to the press, is either indifferent to an amendment or opposes it as divisive and bigoted.

Actually, opposition to gay marriage is a far less narrow phenomenon than supposed. The Republican position is, in fact, at least a 60-40 issue, one that unites their base *and* attracts swing voters like Bill Cain.

The drive for homosexual marriage in this country has never been popular. Since the campaign kicked off in a 1993 case in Hawaii, a few courts have expressed sympathy, but voters never have. Indeed, in every state where voters have been asked to amend their state constitution to ban gay marriage, they have done so by a stunning margin.

In November 1998, Alaska and Hawaii became the first states to pass amendments banning same-sex recognition. In Alaska, 68 percent of voters supported the ban; in Hawaii 69 percent. In March 2000, California became the next state, when voters there approved Prop. 22, by 61 to 39 percent. Finally, in November 2000, Nevadans voted to ban gay marriage, while Nebraskans voted to prohibit same-sex marriage and domestic partnerships. In both states the amendments passed 70 percent to 30 percent.

Four years later, little has changed. In late February the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press released a study measuring voter intensity on the issue. The headline

Mark Stricherz, a 2003-04 Phillips Foundation fellow, is a writer living in Washington, D.C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

said it all: "Gay Marriage A Voting Issue, But Mostly for Opponents." A full 34 percent said they would not vote for a candidate who backed same-sex marriage. In contrast, only 6 percent said they would not support an opponent of gay nuptials.

Of course, passing a constitutional amendment affirming the traditional definition of marriage is another story. Not even the amendment's biggest supporters predict passage any time soon. Republican senator Wayne Allard of Colorado, one of the sponsors, says he hopes to get a vote this session, but avoids open talk of its winning the necessary two-thirds support. Matt Daniels, president of the Alliance for Marriage, declines to offer a prediction. He says instead that May 17, when Massachusetts starts issuing marriage licenses to gay couples, will galvanize opponents. "This will be a time when people start paying attention at the polls."

But the media have seized on the difficulty of passing a constitutional amendment, as well as the results of a few polls, to claim that most Americans support domestic partnership laws. Not true. In fact, many oppose them intensely. As much was said in a January 2004 memo by Republican pollster Bill McInturff of Public Opinion Strategies. It reported that if President Bush opposed civil unions while running against a Democratic nominee who favored them, "Bush picks up a net 12 points in his favor."

Those most opposed to gay marriage are the white working class. Over the years this group has been referred to as Joe Sixpack, Reagan Democrats, NASCAR dads, and waitress moms. But their ideology remains roughly the same—economically liberal and culturally moderate or conservative. And while the media tend to dismiss them, they represent a crucial voting bloc. Indeed, both McInturff and Democratic pollster Stanley Greenberg have found independently that this group will vote to oppose gay rights.

This group, according to McInturff, consists of Democratic men, seniors, union members, and residents of Bush-leaning swing states. Subsequent polls have revealed another development: Many of these voters live, as Bill Cain does, in the battleground states of the Rust Belt and Midwest.

For example, the exit polls from Super Tuesday's Democratic primary in Ohio showed only 26 percent of these Democratic voters supporting gay marriage, while only 28 percent backed civil unions. Even the spokesman for the Ohio Democratic party concedes that some Buckeye Democrats are likely to defect in November. "The people who are older have often made up their minds that homosexuality is wrong," said Dan Trevas. And "there are less educated voters who haven't been exposed to a lot of different cultures." Condescending, perhaps, but true.

The only real disagreement among the pollsters I talked to was the size of the Republican gain on the gay marriage issue.

Soccer moms certainly aren't the only swing voters. In 2000, voters with a high school degree or less made up about a quarter of those who went to the polls. Save for 1972, this had been a reliably Democratic constituency since the advent of the New Deal. But then in 1988 and 2000 both Bush and his father won this group by one percentage point. In 2000, Greenberg found in a postelection analysis, the number one reason white voters without four-year college degrees turned away from Al Gore was concern for the culture. "The cultural minefield caused the most damage," Greenberg wrote, "moving non-college white women and younger non-college white men to Bush."

A final group that actively opposes gay marriage is seniors. According to the Pew poll, 45 percent of those aged 65 and over said they would not vote for a candidate who supported gay marriage. Needless to say, seniors represent a crucial voting bloc. In 2000 they made up about one fifth of those who voted, and favored Gore by 51 to 47 percent.

Of course, if libertarian-minded voters threatened to abandon the GOP over Bush's support for a constitutional amendment, the issue would be far trickier. But no one has shown or even predicted a revolt from soccer moms or liberal Republicans.

The only real disagreement among the pollsters I talked to was the size of the Republican gain on the gay marriage issue. Stuart Rothenberg likened it to a "bunt" or a "sacrifice fly" in a baseball game, while CNN political analyst Bill Schneider said Republicans could maybe pick up a few swing voters.

By contrast, Republican pollsters tend to view the issue as a big winner. Gene Ulm of Public Opinion Strategies believes it will definitely attract many swing voters, especially among the white working class. "In a sense I think what you will see is the revenge of the Reagan Democrat coalition," he said.

How does the Bush campaign view the issue? It's hard to say; officials declined to comment. Currently Bush is portraying his support for a constitutional amendment as a defensive maneuver, not a wedge issue. But it's easy to imagine Bush-Cheney campaign surrogates portraying Democrats as elites hostile to the American family.

Many Democratic strategists find the issue annoying. As well they should. Joel Rogers and Ruy Teixeira pointed out, in *America's Forgotten Majority*, that "the key for Clinton in 1996 was increased support among working class voters." Indeed, when Democrats get the votes of people like Bill Cain, they usually win. But right now Cain plans to vote Republican, and there's probably nothing the media can do to change that. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Building a Better Baby

The dark side of universal prenatal screening.

BY AGNES R. HOWARD

WE MAY NOT YET have mastered a way to insure perfect babies, but researchers are hard at work improving methods to eliminate imperfect ones.

This winter brought news that specialists are pioneering FASTER (First and Second-Trimester Evaluation of Risk), a combination of maternal blood tests and ultrasounds to detect Down syndrome at 10-13 weeks. Screening pregnant women this way could reduce the use of the more invasive amniocentesis, normally performed at 15 to 18 weeks. And it would have a further advantage: A woman who failed a FASTER test could terminate her pregnancy before it showed.

While some obstetricians are exploring alternatives to amnio, however, another group of doctors is calling for broadened access to it. In the January 24 issue of the British medical journal the *Lancet*, Ryan A. Harris, A. Eugene Washington, Robert F. Nease Jr., and Miriam Kuppermann maintain that all pregnant women—not just those over 35—should be able to choose either amniocentesis or chorionic villus sampling (CVS), since all would benefit from knowing whether a fetus were abnormal.

By whatever means it is obtained, of course, this knowledge is provided not just to satisfy idle curiosity. About 90 percent of women who discover their baby has a chromosomal disorder abort it. While the FASTER camp, who call for early screening, and the Harris camp, who stress universal access to genetic diagnosis, advocate different kinds of prenatal testing, they have a common aim. Under the guise of extending opportunity to women by giving all "informed choice," they would, in practice, burden every mother with the expectation that she bring to birth only a healthy baby.

The *Lancet* article is particularly troubling for the way it makes its case. Entitled "Cost utility of prenatal diagnosis and the risk-based threshold," it reports the findings of a survey of 534 women of diverse backgrounds, aged 16-47, who were asked about the "time-tradeoff utility" of having a child born with a chromosomal abnormality. The authors analyzed the respondents' preferences alongside published case studies and trials of prenatal testing, abortion rates, and cost data. Harris et al. argue that the familiar age threshold for prenatal diagnosis should be abandoned. It rests, they say, on a misjudgment about the way women weigh the risks of miscarriage caused by anmiocentesis against the risks of Down syndrome. At present, prenatal diagnosis is mostly used with higher-risk patients, particularly those past 35, the age when the probability of Down syndrome begins to overtake the probability of procedure-related miscarriage. The working assumption has been that women would be unwilling to incur the risk of miscarriage unless the risk of having an abnormal child were greater.

Harris et al. turn that assumption

Agnes R. Howard teaches at Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts.

Kick Start Your Day!

Log onto weeklystandard.com for the all new Daily Standard.

Find articles written just for the Web–with the same lively opinions you've come to expect from THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

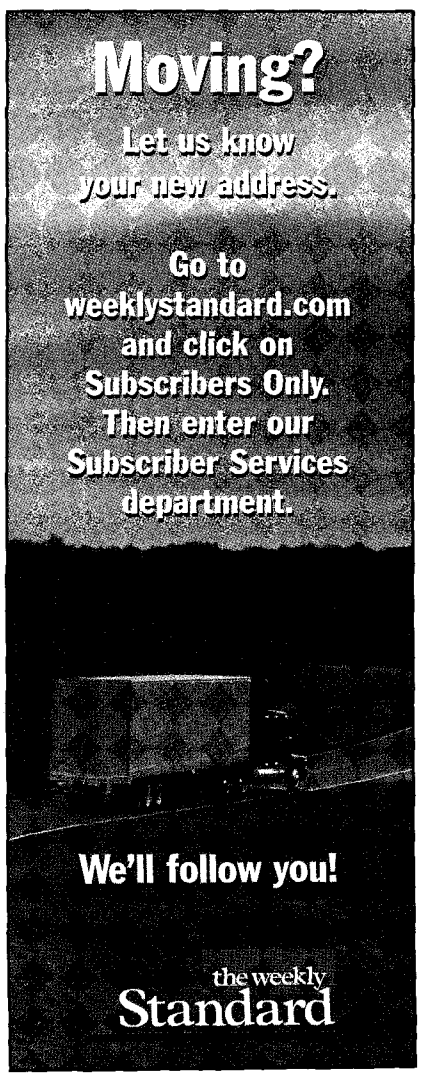
the weekly Standard

tandard • Info • Search • Subscribers Only

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on its head. They contend that women are much more worried about having a Down syndrome baby than they are about losing a normal baby to miscarriage after the test. The costs of the test, they argue, are amply repaid by either the reassurance that the baby is normal or the ability to avoid the difficulties of having a Down syndrome child: "The more reassurance women desire, the more cost effective is the testing." This boils down to a judgment that women would rather forfeit a healthy baby than brook the possibility of raising an abnormal one.

How did we get here? Many elements have helped bring us to a point where it could seem prudent to screen all fetuses in order to reduce Down syndrome births, and a considerable part of the problem rests with two faulty assumptions about pregnancy.



The first is our contemporary treatment of childbearing as a medical process. Fetal quality controls would fit right in alongside the many other tests a pregnant woman undergoes. Depending on the sensibilities of her obstetrician, bad test results may transform somebody's baby into a biological complication to be remedied by a medical procedure. Rayna Rapp, an anthropologist who studies prenatal testing, writes of a woman who received an unhappy diagnosis and entered her doctor's office in tears, only to be scolded (comforted?) this way: "That isn't a baby. . . . It's a collection of cells that made a mistake."

In a culture where choosing the test is roughly equivalent to choosing abortion for an abnormal fetus, a decision to make the test a routine part of prenatal care would lend to ensuing abortions an air of inevitability, even medical necessity. To institutionalize these tests may damage the way women perceive pregnancy. As Barbara Katz Rothman argued in her important 1986 book, *The Tentative Pregnancy*, the use of amniocentesis and CVS may make a woman reluctant to acknowledge she is going to have a baby until a favorable test result has signaled it is safe to keep the child—sometimes well into the second trimester, after she has started to feel the baby kick. Although Rothman supports abortion, including in Down syndrome cases, she regrets the consequences of the tests.

The second cultural problem is the assumption that pregnancy is essentially a matter of choice. A woman starting prenatal care can expect to be asked, "Is this a wanted pregnancy?" Already we act as though what gives moral standing to pregnancy is the choosing of it, preferably in advance, if necessary after the fact, but always the conscious determination to continue rather than end it. This pattern of thought makes it easier to hazard a healthy fetus in order to prevent having a defective one, without admitting to ourselves that this is our calculation. We can act as though, until the test is done with good results, the pregnancy isn't quite real. To universalize genetic diagnosis is to entrench even more deeply than we already have the idea that a baby *becomes* a baby only when we choose to grant that status—if and when it passes genetic muster.

To admit this is not to place a sinister cast on the issue. The effort of Harris et al. to weigh in economic terms the danger of having a Down syndrome baby is already sinister enough. The authors calculate that having the test and aborting an abnormal child can gain a woman nearly $15,000 per year in improved quality of life (QALY). The two commentators whose remarks accompany the *Lancet* article express some reservations about this. "In any prenatal diagnostic intervention," they note, "there are ethical questions not directly addressed by economic analysis." True enough. After all, one could make the case that all children impose a cost in quality of life, even entirely healthy, normal ones. It is grotesque to measure children's worth primarily in QALY terms.

The work of Barbara Katz Rothman once again provides a cautionary tale. Examining the introduction of fetal screening in the Netherlands in the late 1980s, Rothman found that midwives, who presided over most deliveries there, resisted the tests. Explaining their decision not to recommend screening to their patients, some midwives asked: "Why spoil the pregnancy?" That is, there is a human good that is fostered by allowing pregnancy to be a hopeful time, a worthwhile stage of motherhood. To press pregnant women to learn about genetic disorders is to reinforce the notion that it is permissible to give birth only to normal babies. Granted, wide-scale testing would offer reassurance to many, but at the high cost of further degrading the way we bear ourselves toward the children we bear. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

No More Clash of Civilizations

Greece and Turkey make up.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

MEDITERRANEAN EUROPE, a borderland between Christendom and Islam since the eighth century, has been the scene of bloody clashes in recent weeks. The March 11 massacre in Madrid, apparently perpetrated by Moroccan Islamic extremists, had no sooner receded from the front pages than riots convulsed Kosovo, pitting the majority-Muslim Albanians against Christian Orthodox Serbs. Farther east, however, where Orthodox Greece and Muslim Turkey long existed in bitter tension, developments are more encouraging. The March 7 election in Greece that ended nearly a quarter-century of Socialist rule has strengthened a growing Greek-Turkish amity, which could eventually ease the way for the admission of Turkey to the European Union.

The victors in the Greek election—Kostas Karamanlis and his conservative New Democracy party—won on a classic free market platform. They preached lower taxes for citizens and corporations, leaner government, deregulation, privatization and denationalization of major industries, and reform of social security, health care, and education.

Their opponents, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), in power for 20 of the last 23 years, had long been known for virulent anti-American and anti-NATO rhetoric, and such provocative policies in foreign affairs as allowing Arab and other extremists free access to their country so long as they refrained from harming local interests. As a result, Greece had long been treated with near-universal disdain in European capitals, as well as in Washington.

At the same time, PASOK, for all its coziness with Arab militants, indulged in furious demagogy against Muslim Turkey. There was no contradiction in this—Arabs don't like Turkey, which has close links to Israel. But above all, Greeks still smart over their long humiliation at the hands of the Turks, symbolized by the fall of Constantinople in 1453. The Turks ruled all or part of Greece until 1912.

In 1999, Greece's international standing hit bottom when it was revealed that Greek diplomats had sheltered Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the main anti-Turkish, Kurdish terrorist group, the Kurdistan Workers' party (PKK), in the Greek embassy in Kenya. Ocalan was eventually handed over to Turkey for trial, and is now serving a life sentence.

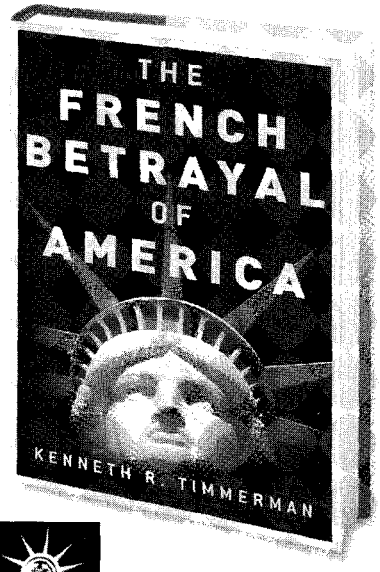
With nowhere to go but up, Greek foreign policy took a dramatic turn. In 1999, Greece reestablished political, business, and cultural links with Turkey. The same year, a new NATO Joint Command Headquarters was set up in Larissa, Greece—notwithstanding the fierce opposition of most Greeks to the NATO operation then underway to rescue the Kosovar Albanians. This mending of fences helped pave the way for NATO to provide security assistance to the Athens Olympics this August.

The rise of George Papandreou—son and grandson of Greek prime ministers—within PASOK was partly

Stephen Schwartz, a frequent contributor, is an adjunct fellow at the Western Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

New from the bestselling author of *Preachers of Hate* and *Shakedown*

It's Worse Than You Thought



Kenneth Timmerman worked as an investigative journalist in France for eighteen years. Now, in this shocking insider account, he details how:

- **France illegally sold U.S. military secrets to Saddam Hussein.**
- **Chirac lied to President Bush and to the public about the war in Iraq.**

The French Betrayal of America ...

It's an Outrage.

CROWN FORUM

Wherever books are sold

A Member of the Crown Publishing Group • CrownForum.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

responsible for this new direction. Unlike his father, Andreas, a socialist more in the spirit of Fidel Castro than of Tony Blair, George favored reaching out to the Turks. He championed a full and normal partnership between neighbors, even though the Cyprus and Aegean issues remained unresolved. To the surprise of foreign observers as well as domestic Turk-baiters, Greece even began energetically to support Turkish entry into the European Union, a position unthinkable only years before.

This was an interesting reversal, casting the Greeks as more enlightened than the bigger E.U. members, who fret over Islamic expansion within their borders. As a participant in European institutions, Turkey could help diminish Arab influence over Muslims on European soil. Turkish Muslims are overwhelmingly private and tolerant in their religious views, and even with a moderate religious party, the AK, in power, their government enforces a secularism far more rigid than that imposed in, for example, France. (Indeed, when the French recently barred Muslim girls from wearing headscarves in state schools, the policy was a controversial innovation affecting an aggrieved minority. Turkey, with its Muslim millions, has maintained the same ban for decades. Late last year, Turks were stunned when their nonpartisan president refused to invite the wives of public officials, including the wife of the prime minister, to celebrations of the Turkish National Day because the women, like some 60 percent of the female population, cover their heads.)

Thanks to European Turkophobia, Ankara may be kept out of the E.U. until at least 2020. Recent progress on the long-vexed question of Cyprus, however, holds promise. On May 1, Cyprus—the touchstone of emotion and anxiety among the Greeks when they consider their Turkish neighbors—is due to join the E.U.

Cyprus, home to both Greeks and Turks for centuries, has a large Greek majority. In 1974, a dictatorship of the military right—the infamous "Greek colonels"—overthrew the democratic government of Cyprus, and attempted to annex the island.

Kostas Karamanlis

AFP/Aris Messinis

This foolhardy gambit provided Turkey with a pretext to invade Cyprus and create a "Turkish Republic" in the northern half; it also brought about the downfall of the Greek monarchy, the collapse of the military junta, and the establishment of a parliamentary democracy in Athens.

To protest Turkey's action in Cyprus, Greece withdrew from NATO's integrated military structure for Southern Europe. The PASOK government seemed bent on keeping the wound unhealed, and the two countries came close to war in 1987 and 1996 over sovereignty issues in the Aegean Sea. These were the years when the Greek left loved to blame the United States for the country's problems, and played on sentimentality among the Greeks toward Orthodox Russia, even while the atheist Communists still ruled in Moscow. The Turks, by contrast, considered Russia their hereditary enemy. Indeed, Turkey's long border with the Soviet Union made it an attractive military partner for the United States during the Cold War, a geopolitical advantage the Greeks resented. Then in the 1990s, Turkey served as the main operational base for the U.S.-led air patrols maintaining the "no fly" zone over Iraqi Kurdistan.

But all that is in the past. Now the Socialists—with George Papandreou as their leader—are in opposition, and Kostas Karamanlis, is prime minister of Greece, like his father before him. His government has approved a framework for direct Greek-Turkish negotiations regarding Cyprus. And on April 20, the Cypriots are scheduled to vote in a U.N.-sponsored referendum. Greek and Turkish Cypriots will be asked to approve a fairly predictable U.N.-style system for settlement of refugee claims, along with provisions for power-sharing between the two communities.

While U.N.-sponsored "conflict resolution" has failed in Bosnia and Kosovo, the Greeks and Turks, fortified by their thriving capitalist economies, seem bent on avoiding the path taken in the upper Balkans. For this, Athens and Ankara deserve congratulation and support. In the age of terrorism, a rapprochement between Greece, the cradle of democracy, and Turkey, the pioneer of Muslim secularism, is welcome news for the civilized world. It is of course anathema to al Qaeda. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Bumpy Road to Democracy in Iraq

It's not easy recovering from generations of despotism

By Fred Barnes

Baghdad

Here's what you learn quickly in Iraq: The transformation of the country into a peaceful, free market democracy is a bigger, more demanding, and far more difficult project than you ever dreamed. Nonetheless, a year after the fall of Saddam Hussein, Operation Iraqi Freedom has gained impressive momentum. Iraq has traffic jams, street life, drinkable water, reasonably reliable electricity, and is about to experience an extraordinary economic boom, thanks to the $18.4 billion in reconstruction funds soon to begin arriving. Though terrorist attacks continue, they don't halt progress and are likely to be gradually beaten back.

But don't assume a growing economy and declining terrorism spell success. There's a serious obstacle remaining—the attitude of many Iraqis. Kurds, educated exiles who've returned from London and Detroit, and a good number of other Iraqis have embraced what Paul Bremer calls the "new Iraq." But many Iraqis haven't. They don't want Saddam back, but they look unfavorably on the American occupation. Like the French, they may never forgive America for having liberated them.

The immensity of the task in Iraq is really breathtaking. Iraq is a large country, with the north as different from the south as Boston is from Birmingham. All at once, America and its allies are trying to modernize a primitive banking system, assess and exhume scores of mass graves, revive Iraqi agriculture, create a respectable press corps, recruit and train police and a new army, replace worn-out and antiquated infrastructure, establish regulatory agencies like an Iraqi version of the Federal Communications Commission, start a public broadcasting system, and persuade Iraqis they're better off without heavily subsidized food, gasoline, and electricity. And that's just off the top of my head.

Iraqis want help. Indeed, they demand it and are angry and frustrated when they don't get it instantly. But they appear to hate being helped. Their expectation was an America capable of supplanting Saddam in less than three weeks would improve everything overnight. When that didn't happen, they grew frustrated. Now they're conflicted between lashing out at the American occupation and trying to get the full benefit of it. For success to be achieved, they need to buy into the program fully—democracy, free markets, rule of law, property rights, political compromise, and patience. They need an attitude adjustment.

Americans I talked to in 10 days here agree Iraqis are difficult to deal with. They're sullen and suspicious and conspiracy-minded. Maybe it's not their fault. Bremer, the Coalition Provisional Authority administrator and America's chief asset here, says Saddam's oppression was worse than the Communists' in Eastern Europe and Russia. At least there was a period of transition in the Communist countries when the terror was lifted and the rules liberalized. Iraq went from a totalitarian tyranny to an open society in a single day. That's bound to be traumatic.

But perhaps the problem is more basic. Seventy years ago, Iraq's first king, Faisal I, described Iraqis this way: "There is still—and I say this with a heart full of sorrow—no Iraqi people, but an unimaginable mass of human beings devoid of any patriotic ideas, imbued with religious traditions and absurdities, prone to anarchy and perpetually ready to rise against any government whatsoever." Having been cowed by Saddam, many Iraqis seem to be making up for it by distrusting their American occupiers and hectoring them whenever the occasion arises.

The press in Iraq feeds this mood. The two TV news channels that Iraqis watch, Al Jazeera and al-Arabia, are reflexively anti-American. So is the major news service, Reuters, and AP, staffed by Europeans, isn't much better. The liberation of Iraq has brought about a flowering of newspapers—nearly 200 of them—and that's a positive

Fred Barnes is executive editor of The Weekly Standard.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

development. But the papers obsess on the subject of brutal treatment of innocent Iraqis by American soldiers. Terrorists who kill innocent Iraqis get softer treatment.

Tales of mistreatment are largely mythical. U.S. troops have been trained to be nice to Iraqis, strange as that seems. I saw soldiers deal respectfully with Iraqis all over the country. In meeting soldiers in World War II, Dwight Eisenhower had a great icebreaker. He would ask, "Where you from, soldier?" It put GIs at ease. I tried it in Iraq, and it led to friendly chats every time. The officers are fine, but it's the enlisted ranks these days that are most impressive. They're polite warriors.

Two incidents dominated the Iraqi press in late March. In one, six soldiers were charged with assaulting detainees at a military prison, a breakdown in discipline that infuriated the top American commander, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, and the chief spokesman, Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt. In the other, two Iraqis working for al-Arabia TV were killed in a clash at a checkpoint. The exact details were unclear.

Bremer and Kimmitt went to unprecedented lengths to soothe Iraqi anger over the killings, quickly ordering an independent investigation. They met privately with Iraqi journalists. And Kimmitt discussed the case at briefings on the record. The point is he and Bremer didn't play down or ignore the incident. This got them nowhere with Iraqi journalists, who have reacted hysterically. Their questions at briefings are mostly of the why-are-you-Americans-picking-on-Iraqis variety. They rarely inquire about the progress of investigations of terrorist attacks.

The new Iraqi media are as close as you can get to a proxy for the Iraqi people, at least in the Baghdad area. Iraqi reporters have been coddled by the military and Bremer's CPA in hopes they'll evolve into a responsible free press. TV reporters were given millions of dollars of state-of-the-art equipment. At briefings, Iraqis get a simultaneous translation, and they're allowed to ask most of the questions. Special backgrounders are conducted for them. A group of Iraqi reporters meets weekly with Bremer, a break American journalists don't get.

The experiment hasn't worked. When Secretary of State Colin Powell appeared at a press conference here last week, the Iraqis called for a moment of silence for the two dead TV journalists. Then one read a tendentious statement, complaining the United States has neither made Iraq safer nor stopped terrorism. This was followed by a walkout, as Powell stood silently and watched. Several days later, the entire Iraqi press corps marched on the "green zone," the American headquarters, with a letter of protest for Bremer. Rather than professionalized, the Iraqi press has become politicized.

True, Iraqi journalists act better than they did months ago, when *all* the questions were barely disguised accusations or simply based on rumor. Journalism training provided by the CPA and other organizations has helped. But a journalism teacher in Iraq wrote in the *Washington Post* that her students cling to the idea that their job is to read the news—not report it—and then comment on it. Likewise, Iraqis watch the news about the occupation, then comment on it, negatively.

I've dwelt on the bad news. The truth is the difficulty with Iraqis—their whining, their ethnic squabbling, their anti-Americanism—hasn't diverted Bremer from his relentless nation-building. He knows the Iraqi attitude problem can't be solved overnight. And while the security environment here is dodgy, the only downside of terrorist attacks on the creation of a new Iraq has been to discourage foreign companies from rushing in with large-scale projects. In short, the American intervention is so powerful and all-encompassing that it overshadows everything else. It is strongly led by Bremer, well organized, and undaunted. The CPA has spread teams of experts, academics, administrators, bureaucrats, and consultants throughout the restructured Iraqi government and private sector. Visit the new central bank and they're there. Travel to Kurdistan and you'll run into them.

I didn't understand the breadth of the effort until I noticed a press officer's list of phone numbers of senior advisers in various fields. The fields were agriculture, standards and quality control, culture, displaced persons, education, electricity, environment, finance, foreign affairs, health, higher education, housing, human rights, industry, interior, water, justice, labor, security, oil, public works, planning, religious affairs, science, trade, transportation, youth and sports, Baghdad, civil affairs, governance, Iraqi media, oil policy, infrastructure, private sector, and strategic communications. Amazing.

The most encouraging trend in Iraq is solid economic growth, sure to be followed by torrid growth. The economy was run into the ground by Saddam. The GDP for 2003 was $20 billion, less than Americans receive from the Earned Income Tax Credit. Unemployment, as best anyone can tell, exceeded 60 percent. Already GDP for 2004 is expected to reach $24 billion or $25 billion, and joblessness has dipped below 30 percent, according to Bill Block, a Princeton-educated economist for the Treasury Department now working for the CPA. Bremer thinks unemployment may have already fallen to less than 20 percent.

This summer the Iraqi economy will be on the receiving end of the biggest stimulus in history. Mike Fleischer, an economic adviser and brother of former White House press secretary Ari Fleischer, has made a back-of-the-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

envelope calculation that money paid to Iraqis annually from the reconstruction budget over the next few years will amount to 6 percent of GDP. That's staggering. A comparable injection of new money in the U.S. economy would be nearly $650 billion a year. The Bush tax cuts pale in comparison.

And the money will enter an Iraqi economy that suddenly is among the freest in the world. Iraq has no tariffs or duties, a flat tax rate of 15 percent, no restrictions on capital investment, few regulations that are being enforced, and a new currency that's actually strengthened since its introduction last December. The only dinars with Saddam's face on them are sold as souvenirs. Of course the economy is still primitive in many ways. All transactions are done in cash. There are no credit cards or ATMs, and no privatization of state-owned companies has taken place.

But a consumer-led surge is underway. Where the money came from nobody knows. The assumption is people hoarded cash instead of depositing it in banks that Saddam might loot. Now they're on a spending spree. Satellite dishes, banned under Saddam, sprout from nearly every roof. A half-million or more used cars have been imported from Jordan, Kuwait, and Turkey. Cell phone use is soaring.

Fleischer likes to take visitors for a tour of the Karrada shopping district across the Tigris River from CPA headquarters in Saddam's Republican Palace. Boxes of refrigerators, TVs, generators, and small appliances are piled in front of stores. Vacant storefronts and bare lots are being turned into retail businesses and new buildings. "Nothing says optimism to me like putting up a new building," says Fleischer. What also says optimism is the return of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of exiles with money and schemes for investing it.

A hot economy could have a significant social and political impact. For one thing, it might ease Iraq's religious and ethnic tensions. For another, it would make the decision to abolish bankrupt nationalized enterprises acceptable because the 500,000 employees could find jobs in the private sector. And growing incomes would allow Iraq's first elected government to begin decontrol of prices. With that last step, Iraq would have a truly modern economy.

At the moment, only half the economy stands to thrive, the Wild West capitalist half. The other half is socialist, not only the so-called SOEs (state-owned enterprises) but the subsidies for food, gas, and electricity. Iraqis pay a pittance for gas and virtually nothing for food and electricity. The economic consequences of this are destructive. It necessitates high taxes, which grabs money that might be put to more productive uses. Bremer, in a rush to lock in reforms before handing sovereignty to Iraqis on June 30, wants to start decontrolling prices this spring.

Block, the Treasury economist, believes the Iraq economy will grow 7 percent to 9 percent a year for the next decade. Were Bremer staying on for the next 10 years as Iraqi viceroy, robust growth could be all but guaranteed. But he will hand over sovereignty to Iraqis on June 30 and be replaced by an American ambassador who won't have his sweeping power and may lack his political skill as well. A massive American presence—100,000 troops and the largest U.S. embassy in the world—will remain, but American influence will begin to dwindle. Before the end of January 2005, a democratically elected government will take office, further eroding U.S. clout.

Bremer's handpicked Iraqi Governing Council has been willing to compromise and sacrifice for the common good. Will elected officials do the same?

For the past year, America and its allies have held Iraq together. Bremer's handpicked Iraqi Governing Council was willing to compromise and sacrifice for the common good. The question is whether elected officials will do the same or represent their narrow ethnic, religious, or regional constituencies. I have my doubts. But an American official who's worked closely with Iraqis and whose views I respect differs. "Don't underestimate the sense of Iraqi national pride, despite the strong sectarian identification," he says. "Saddam's equal-opportunity repression has created a sense of community among very disparate factions. Kurds and Shia and even many Sunnis have mass grave and torture chamber victimhood in common. . . . Attend something as seemingly superficial as an Iraqi sports event and you'll see what I mean about national pride."

Should national unity prevail, Iraq's chances of becoming a stable democracy will improve dramatically. I'd like to see one other thing in Iraq, an outbreak of gratitude for the greatest act of benevolence one country has ever done for another. A grateful Iraqi heart would be a sign of a new Iraqi attitude and a signal of sure success. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Holocaust Shrug

Why is there so much indifference to the liberation of Iraq?

By David Gelernter

I hear and read all the time about Democratic fury; evidently, enraged Democrats are prepared to do whatever it takes to rid the country of George W. Bush's foul presence. Somehow Republican rage doesn't seem quite as newsworthy (and when it does show up, the storyline is usually "Republicans Angry at Bush"). To be fair, Republicans *do* control the presidency and both houses of Congress, and ought to be far gone in euphoria. But they are not. There are lots of unhappy and quite a few furious ones out there, and they are not *all* mad at the president. Some reporters will find this hard to believe, but quite a lot of them are actually mad at the Democrats.

Consider Iraq. By overthrowing Saddam, we stopped a loathsome bloody massacre—a hell-on-earth that would have been all too easily dismissed as fantastic propaganda if we hadn't seen and heard the victims and watched the torturers on videotape. Now: There is all sorts of latitude for legitimate attack on the Bush administration and Iraq. A Bush critic could allege that our preparation was lousy, our strategy wrong, our postwar administration a failure, and so on ad infinitum . . . so long as he stays in ground-contact with the basic truth: This war was an unmitigated triumph for humanity. Everything we have learned since the end of full-scale fighting has only made it seem *more* of a triumph.

But Democratic talk about Iraq is dominated not by the hell and horror we abolished or the pride and joy of what we achieved. Many Democrats mention Saddam's crimes only grudgingly. What they really want to discuss is how the administration "lied" about WMDs (one of the more infantile accusations in modern political history), how (thanks to Iraq) our allies can't stand us anymore, how (on account of Iraq) we are shortchanging the war on terror. But *don't you understand*, a listener wants to scream, that Saddam's government was ripping human flesh to shreds? Was consuming whole populations by greedy mouthfuls, masticating them, drooling blood? Committing crimes that are painful even to *describe*? Don't you understand what we achieved by liberating Iraq, what *mankind* achieved? When we hear about Saddam and his two sons, how can we help but think of the three-faced Lucifer at the bottom of Dante's hell?—"with six eyes he was weeping and over three chins dripped tears and bloody foam," *Con sei occhi piangea, e per tre menti / gocciava 'l pianto e sanguinosa bava*, as he crushes human life between his teeth.

I could understand the Democrats' insisting that this was no *Republican* operation; "we were in favor of it too, we voted for it too, and then voted more money to fund it; we want some credit!" Those would be reasonable political claims. But if you talk as if this war were one big, stupid blunder that we are stuck with and have to make the best of—you are nowhere near shouting distance of reality; people would suspect your sanity if you were not a politician already. Instead of insisting that the war belongs to them, too, Democrats are running top speed in the other direction. Howard Dean led the way on this flight from duty, honor, and truth, but it didn't take long for most of the nation's prominent Democrats (with a few honorable exceptions) to jump aboard the Dean express—which is now, absent Dean, a runaway train.

People ask, why this big deal about Saddam? "Isn't X evil too, and what about Y, and how can you possibly ignore Z?" But we aren't automata; we are able to make distinctions. Some evil is beyond our power to stop. That doesn't absolve us from stopping what we can. All cruelty is bad. Yet some cruel and evil men are worse than others. By any standard we did right by overthrowing Saddam—and do wrong by denying or belittling that fact.

The Democrats' refusal to acknowledge the moral importance of the Coalition's Iraq victory felt, at first, like the Clinton treatment—more relativistic, warped-earth moral geometry in which the truth gradually approaches infinite malleability. Overthrowing vicious dictatorships and stopping crimes against humanity were no longer *that* big a deal once Republicans were running the show. It seemed like the same old hypocrisy, sadly familiar. (I will even concede, for what it's worth, that Republicans can be inconsistent and hypocritical too.)

But as we learned *more* about Saddam's crimes, and

David Gelernter is a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Democrats grew *less* convinced that the war was right and was necessary . . . their response took on a far more sinister color. It started to resemble the Holocaust Shrug.

I suggest only diffidently that the world's indifference to the Coalition's achievement resembles its long-running, well-established lack of interest in Hitler's crimes. I don't claim that Saddam resembles Hitler; I do claim that the world's *indifference* to Saddam resembles its indifference to Hitler.

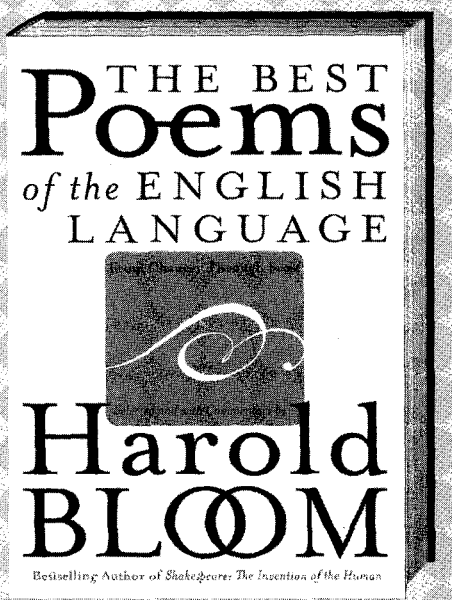
The Holocaust was unique—"fundamentally different," the German philosopher Karl Jaspers wrote, "from all crimes that have existed in the past." Hitler's mission was to convert Germany and eventually all Europe into an engine of annihilating Jew-hatred. He tore the heart out of the Jewish nation. There is nothing "universal" or "paradigmatic" about the Holocaust, and next to Hitler, Saddam is a mere child with a boyish love of torture and mass murder.

Yet Saddam, like Hitler, murdered people sadistically and systematically for the crime of being born. Saddam, like Hitler, believed that mass murder should be efficient, with minimal fuss and bother; it is no accident that both were big believers in poison gas. Saddam's program, like Hitler's, attracted all sorts of sadists; many of Saddam's and Hitler's crimes were not quite as no-fuss, no-muss as the Big Boss preferred. Evidently Saddam, like Hitler, did not personally torture his prisoners, but Saddam (like Hitler) allowed and condoned torture that will stand as a black mark against mankind forever.

Hitler was in a profoundly, fundamentally different league. And yet the distinction is unlikely to have mattered much to a Kurd mother watching her child choke to death on poison gas, or a Shiite about to be diced to bloody pulp. The colossal scale and the routine, systematic nature of torture and murder under Saddam puts him in a special category too. Saddam was small compared with Hitler, yet he was *like* Hitler not only in what he wanted but in what he did. When we marched into Iraq, we halted a small-scale holocaust.

I could understand people disagreeing with this claim, arguing that Saddam was evil but not *that kind* of evil, not evil *enough* to deserve being discussed in those terms. But the opposition I hear doesn't dwell on the nature of Saddam's crimes. It dwells on the nature of America's—*our* mistakes, *our* malfeasance, *our* "lies." It sounds loonier and farther from reality all the time, more and more like the Holocaust Shrug.

Turning away is not evil; it is merely human. And that's bad enough. For years I myself found it easy to ignore or shrug off Saddam's reported crimes. I had no



An essential volume of the finest poetry, selected and with commentary by *New York Times* bestselling author Harold Bloom.

"Every serious reader of poetry really must begin with the works [Bloom] so ardently loves and champions."
—*Booklist*

"Our most valuable critic... Harold Bloom reminds us what matters."
—*Boston Globe*

"A colossus among critics... his enthusiasm for literature is a joyous intoxicant."
—*New York Times Magazine*

HarperCollins*Publishers*
www.harpercollins.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

love for Iraq or Iraqis. Before and during the war I wrote pieces suggesting that Americans not romanticize Iraqis; that we understand postwar Iraq more in terms of occupied Germany than liberated France. But during and after the war it gradually became impossible to ignore the staggering enormity of what Saddam had committed against his own people. And when we *saw* those mass graveyards and torture chambers, heard more and more victims speak, watched those videotapes, the conclusion became inescapable: This war was screamingly, shriekingly *necessary*.

But instead of exulting in our victory, too many of us shrug and turn away and change the subject.

Young people might be misled about the world's response to the Holocaust by the current academic taste for "Holocaust studies" and related projects. It wasn't always this way.

In the years right after the war, there was Holocaust horror all over the world. The appearance of such books as Elie Wiesel's *Night* and Anne Frank's diary kept people thinking. But after that, silence set in. In 1981 Lucy Dawidowicz, most distinguished of all Holocaust historians, wrote of "this historiographical mystery of why the Holocaust was belittled or overlooked in the history books." I remember the 1960s (when I was a child growing up) as years during which the Holocaust was old stuff. On the whole, neither Jews nor gentiles wanted to think about it much. I remember the time and mood acutely on account of travels with my grandfather.

He was a rabbi and a loving but not a happy man. His synagogue was in Brooklyn, at the heart of an area that was full of resettled Holocaust survivors. He would visit them often, especially ones who had lost their families and not remarried. Naturally they were the loneliest. But what they suffered from most was not loneliness but the pressure of not telling. Pressure against their skulls from the inside, hard to bear. They needed to speak, but no one needed to listen.

Old or middle-aged men with gray faces and narrow wrists where the camp number was tattooed forever in dirty turquoise, living alone in small apartments: They would go on for an hour or more, mumbling with downcast eyes as if they were embarrassed—but they were not embarrassed; they were merely trying to keep emotion at bay so they could finish. Not to be cut down by emotion was the thing; they wanted to make it through to the end. So they would mumble quickly as if they were making a run for it, in Yiddish or sometimes Hebrew or, occasionally, heavily accented English. My Hebrew was inadequate and my Yiddish was worse, but I could get the gist, and my grandfather would fill me in afterward. Once an old man wanted to tell us how one man in a barracks of 40 had stolen a piece of bread (or something like that), and in retaliation the whole group was forced at gunpoint to duck-walk in the snow for hours. He didn't know the right word, so he got down on the floor to show us—an old man; but he *had* to tell us what had happened.

Steven Vincent went to Iraq after the war and reported in *Commentary* about Maha Fattah Karah, an old woman, sobbing. "I look to America. I ask America to help me. I ask America not to forget me." Saddam murdered her husband and son. That story takes me back.

My grandfather was driven. He spent years at one point translating a rabbi's memoir from Hebrew, then more years trying to find a publisher—any publisher; but no one wanted it. Holocaust memoirs were a dime a dozen, and (truth to tell) had rarely been hot literary properties in any case. Then he shopped the "private publishers" who would bring out a book for a fee. He tried hard to raise the money. He was a good money-raiser for many fine causes. But this time he failed. No one wanted to underwrite a Holocaust memoir. The book never did appear.

The Holocaust Shrug: To turn away is a natural human reaction. In 1999 (Steven Vincent reports) the Shiite cleric Sadeq al Sadr offended Saddam—whose operatives raped Sadeq's sister in front of him and then killed him by driving nails into his skull. Who can grasp it? In any case, today's sophisticates cultivate shallowness. They deal in cynicism, irony, casual bitterness; not in anguish or horror or joy.

Lucy Dawidowicz discussed the unique enormity of the Holocaust. It destroyed the creative center of world Jewry and transferred premeditated, systematic genocide from "unthinkable" to "thinkable, therefore doable." Mankind has crouched ever since beneath a black cloud of sin and shame.

Nothing will erase the Holocaust, but it is clear what kind of gesture would counterbalance it and maybe lift the cloud: If some army went selflessly to war (a major war, not a rescue operation) *merely* to stop mass murder.

That is not quite what the Coalition did in Iraq. We knew we could beat Saddam (although many people forecast a long, bloody battle); more important, we had plenty of good practical reasons to fight. Nonetheless: There were many steps on the way to the Holocaust, and we can speak of a *step towards* the act of selfless national goodness that might fix the broken moral balance of the cosmos. The Iraq war might be the largest step mankind has ever taken in this direction. It is a small step even so—but cause for rejoicing. Our combat troops did it. It is our privilege and our duty to make the most of it. To belittle it is a sad and sorry disgrace. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Southeast Asian Front

Creeping towards Islamization in Indonesia

By Paul Marshall

The struggle against extremist Islam is not only military and diplomatic, it is also a war of ideas. In this battle there are few more important countries than Indonesia, whose 230 million people make it by far the largest Muslim country and democracy. It is also home to the largest concentration of Muslims developing an understanding of Islam at home in a democratic and diverse world, and committed to resisting the reactionary versions being exported from Saudi Arabia.

However, the country remains under threat from Islamist radicals, and its impending elections provide ample opportunity for extremist mischief. Its problem is that the radicals are committed, organized, have a clear vision, and are often well funded, and so can intimidate and outmaneuver their larger but more hesitant Muslim and nationalist opponents.

Islam came to Indonesia via merchants and preachers, not conquerors. A moderate Sufi style took hold in a largely Hindu culture adept at taking the edge off incoming religions. Recent polls show that only about 14 percent of the population could be called Islamist on even the most expansive definition.

In Western lists of the world's Islamic leaders, we seldom find Hasyim Muzadi or Ahmad Syafii Maarif. Yet they head two huge Muslim social, religious, and educational organizations—Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah—that reach up to 50 million and 40 million people respectively, more than the population of any Arab country except Egypt. They, and others such as Abdurrahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid, are developing and propagating an understanding of Islam that is creative and culturally attuned. They have studied in the West and also in the major centers of Islamic learning in the Middle East, and tend to resent being lectured on Islam by Arabs. Three of them have told me that they find Islamists, whether homegrown or Arab, woefully ignorant of Islamic texts and historic Islam, with little grasp of Islam beyond a collection of laws.

It should be noted that many Indonesian radical leaders have Arab backgrounds, some stemming from a century-old influx from bin Laden's home turf, the Hadramawt Valley on the Yemeni/Saudi border. And for at least a decade, the Saudis have been pumping in money with the goal of replacing Indonesia's Islam with their own strict Wahhabi version.

Despite Indonesia's moderate heritage, militant Islam is gaining ground, and may make further advances this year. The Islamists are trying four ways to impose their views. One is changing the constitution to incorporate Islamic sharia law. Another is terrorism. The third is piecemeal legislative change, and the fourth is domination of towns and provinces where the militants can impose their views through local support or by intimidation. The first two are unlikely to come to anything. The last two—both forms of creeping Islamization—are having more success.

So far, the constitutional route is blocked. Indonesia's 1945 independence constitution enshrined monotheism and morality as core principles, but deliberately did not incorporate Islamic law. At the time of independence, Islamists proposed an amendment, the "Jakarta Charter," requiring all Muslims to follow sharia. The amendment was defeated, prompting some of its proponents to launch an insurrection, the Darul Islam movement, that was not put down until the 1950s.

Following the collapse of the 32-year authoritarian Suharto regime in 1998, Islamists renewed their campaign to enshrine the Charter. Since this was a public effort, in full view of the Muslim and non-Muslim population, it failed conspicuously—most Indonesians simply do not want it. Back in the 1950s, parties supporting the Charter garnered about 40 percent of the national

Paul Marshall is senior fellow at Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom. Among his recent books is Islam at the Crossroads.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vote, but in 2003 its proponents chose not to bring it to a parliamentary vote because the result would have humiliated them.

The failure of this legal route has led to the growth of terrorist groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah, which may have roots in Darul Islam. These groups were active, usually against the country's large Christian population, long before the October 2002 Bali nightclub bombing brought them to world attention. In eastern Indonesia, on the islands of Maluku and Sulawesi, ongoing fighting between Christians and Muslims has left more than 10,000 dead and up to half a million refugees. The groups also share bin Laden's view that Australia's effort to "separate East Timor from Indonesia" is part of an "international conspiracy by followers of the Cross." One of the convicted Bali bombers, Amrozi bin Nurhasiym, says his goal is to establish an Islamic state throughout Southeast Asia. Other militant groups, such as Laskar Jihad and the Islamic Defenders Front, are committed to the same end. (Yusuf Galan, one of the suspects of the March 2004 Madrid bombing, is believed to have done terrorist training in Indonesia.)

The Indonesian government has tried and sentenced Jemaah Islamiyah members for widespread bombings in 2000 as well as the nightclub bombing in Bali, but it still downplays the extent of the terrorist networks. Laskar Jihad, responsible for massacres of Christians in the eastern areas, announced that it was disbanding but now seems to be regrouping in Papua and Ceram. The International Crisis Group's Sidney Jones believes that Jemaah Islamiyah has now splintered into several hardline factions. One of these, the Mujahedeen Kompak, is active in Sulawesi. Another, the Republik Persatuan Islam Indonesia, has been training in the Philippines.

The government's response to terrorism has been weak. Abu Bakar Bashir, widely regarded as the mastermind of Jemaah Islamiyah, was convicted of treason and breaking immigration laws, but received only a four-year sentence, far less than prosecutors had sought. Subsequently, his treason conviction was tossed out, and on March 9, 2004, the Supreme Court, without explanation, reduced his immigration sentence to 18 months. He will be released shortly and vows to continue jihad against Islam's enemies. Indonesian vice president Hamzah Haz visited Bashir in prison and defended him, accusing America of being the real terrorist. Bashir's Islamic academy, Al-Mukmin Ngruki, which produced 5 of the 11 key Bali bombers, is still functioning.

Despite the government's flaccid response, these movements cannot take over the country. The real danger lies elsewhere, in the creeping Islamization produced by legislative change and local pressure. This is likely to be exacerbated as Indonesia goes through a season of elections.

The mind-numbing complexity of Indonesia's electoral process makes America's primaries look like a model of rationality. The simplified version runs like this. On April 5, elections will be held for parliament, for the 32 provincial legislatures, and for about 400 district-level bodies. The Electoral Commission has 30 days to certify the results. Any party that can get 5 percent of the vote *or* 3 percent of the seats in the lower house can then nominate candidates for the presidential and vice presidential elections due on July 5. The Commission has to certify the result of this vote by August 5. If, as seems likely, no ticket gets more than 50 percent of the nationwide vote *and* at least 20 percent of the vote in half the provinces, there must be a runoff between the two top tickets on September 20, with the vote to be validated by October 5 and the victors sworn in on October 20. The length of this process, combined with the fragmentation and corruption of the political establishment, provides plentiful opportunities for Islamists to exploit the parliamentary and party system.

Radicals have already proved adept at exploiting divisions within the parliament. Like its elections, Indonesia's party system is complex and fluid, but, broadly, there are two large nationalist parties, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, led by President Megawati Sukarnoputri, and Golkar, the party Suharto created during his long rule. Neither has the votes to govern on its own, so each must seek the support of the smaller parties that hold the balance of power.

As the price for their support, the small radical parties demand "Islamic" legislation or strategic positions in the government. Yusril Mahendra, whose Crescent Moon and Star party received only 3 percent of the votes in the 1999 elections, has become the spectacularly misnamed "minister of justice and human rights." He is pushing reactionary legislation stipulating that only Muslims may teach Islam to Muslims, even when their parents send them to Christian schools, as is common. All schools with any Muslim students would also be required to have mosques or their equivalent, meaning that mosques would have to be built on the church grounds on which many Christian schools sit.

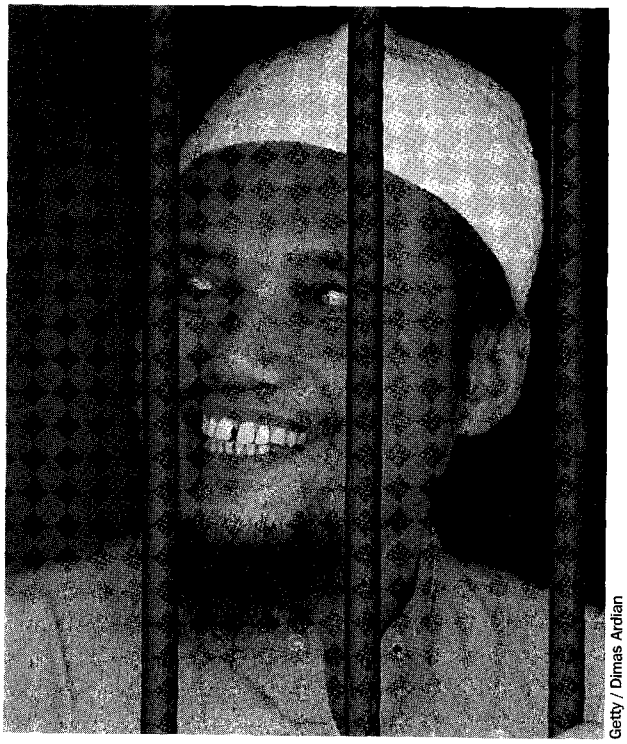
A proposed health bill would bar doctors from treating people of a different religion. Other bills would forbid interreligious marriage. The draft "Law on Inter-Religious Toleration" would require people "to uphold the teachings and values of his respective religion" and forbid views "not aligned with the principal teaching of such religion." Speech or writing "repugnant . . . to a religion" could bring a five-year sentence, as could words leading people

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not to follow "any religion that is based on the belief in one God." The state could force people by law to follow the decrees of a religious teacher and forbid all religious dissent. Religions such as Confucianism and animism would be banned entirely.

Megawati has criticized these proposals, as have Madjid and Nahdlatul Ulama and, to a degree, Muhammadiyah leaders. Former Indonesian president and Nahdlatul Ulama head Wahid described Mahendra to me as the equivalent of a Ku Klux Klan leader, and said he should be fired immediately. Nevertheless, these bills make headway because parties such as Golkar flirt with them in a search for Islamist votes, while other legislators go along in order to avoid the charge of being "against Islam." Then there is intimidation: One high-ranking member of parliament says he is "terrified" of the Islamists.

Meanwhile, the conservative Council of Ulemas has supported the bills, and other Muslim leaders are wobbly. Maarif, though criticizing the proposals, still says he "wants them debated." Din Syamsuddin, secretary general of the Council of Ulemas and probably the next head of Muhammadiyah, told me "it is unwise to confront the radicals—better to keep them inside." The moderates become a "silent majority," with no clear leadership. So an Islamist drift continues.



Getty / Dimas Ardian

A Jemaah Islamiyah leader in a court jail in Jakarta

Radicals are also taking the law into their own hands to enforce sharia on a local level in Sulawesi, Sumatra, Eastern Java, Banten, Flores, Sumba, and the Bandung area. They force women to wear hijabs, threaten alcohol vendors, attack nightclubs, and at prayer times force shops to close and cars to pull over or be stoned. South Sulawesi has Islamic criminal laws on the books, though it has no power to implement them. In March 2004, in Surabaya, Indonesia's second largest city, with nearly 3 million people, thousands demonstrated for the introduction of sharia.

Non-Muslims are coming under increased threat. In recent weeks, a bomb was discovered in a church in Medan, while two churches closed near Surabaya after death threats. Churches in Bekasi, outside Jakarta, have been torn apart by mobs. In 2002 the Jakarta government issued "Letter of Decision No. 137," which provides for closing churches if local residents object to their existence. In Jakarta a dozen churches have been closed in the last three months, often after pressure on local Muslims by outsiders. On Lompok island, after radicals destroyed 18 churches, the local government gave permission to rebuild only one.

There is also frequent violence. There were 13 bombings in Sulawesi in February, and a bomb factory blew up in Jakarta last week. In all this, moderate Muslims are being threatened. Ulil Abshar-Abdallah, a founder of the group Liberal Islam, was hit by a fatwa death sentence by west Javanese clerics because of his writings.

The United States has taken notice of Indonesia's terrorism, but less so of the country's creeping Islamization. President Bush has promised $157 million to help improve education in the country's schools, including the Islamic boarding schools called *pesantrens*. Money is sorely needed, especially to counter Saudi influence. But most *pesantrens* are run by Nahdlatul Ulama and already teach moderate Islam. With Indonesia's patterns of corruption and intimidation, the money could leach away to radicals. As an alternative, Wahid suggests equipping moderates to prevail in the battle of ideas. Let them tell Indonesians why the extremists are bad Muslims. Instead of receiving translations of Saudi works, he says, Indonesians should translate their own works into Arabic.

There are many reasons to care about Indonesia. It is by far the largest country in Southeast Asia, a struggling democracy, and an oil and gas exporter that sits astride the world's busiest shipping lanes. In President Bush's words, Indonesia's success "as a pluralistic and democratic state is essential to the peace and prosperity of this region." Beyond that, Islam will need the influence of moderates such as Madjid, Wahid, and Abshar-Abdullah if the Muslim world is to avoid sliding into a dark age that imperils us all. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Gift of Capital

Rose Onyango, an AIDS orphan in Kenya who lives with her uncle Caleb Onyango and 23 siblings, holds a Heifer International-provided chicken that provides eggs for food and income.

ALL AROUND THE WORLD, Heifer International is working—giving cows, goats and other livestock to impoverished, undernourished families around the globe. With training in animal care and environmentally sound agricultural practices, recipients lift themselves out of poverty to become self-reliant. And they agree to "Pass on the Gift"—to share offspring of their animals with others in need. As recipients share their livestock and their knowledge with others, an expanding network of hope and dignity is created that reaches around the world.

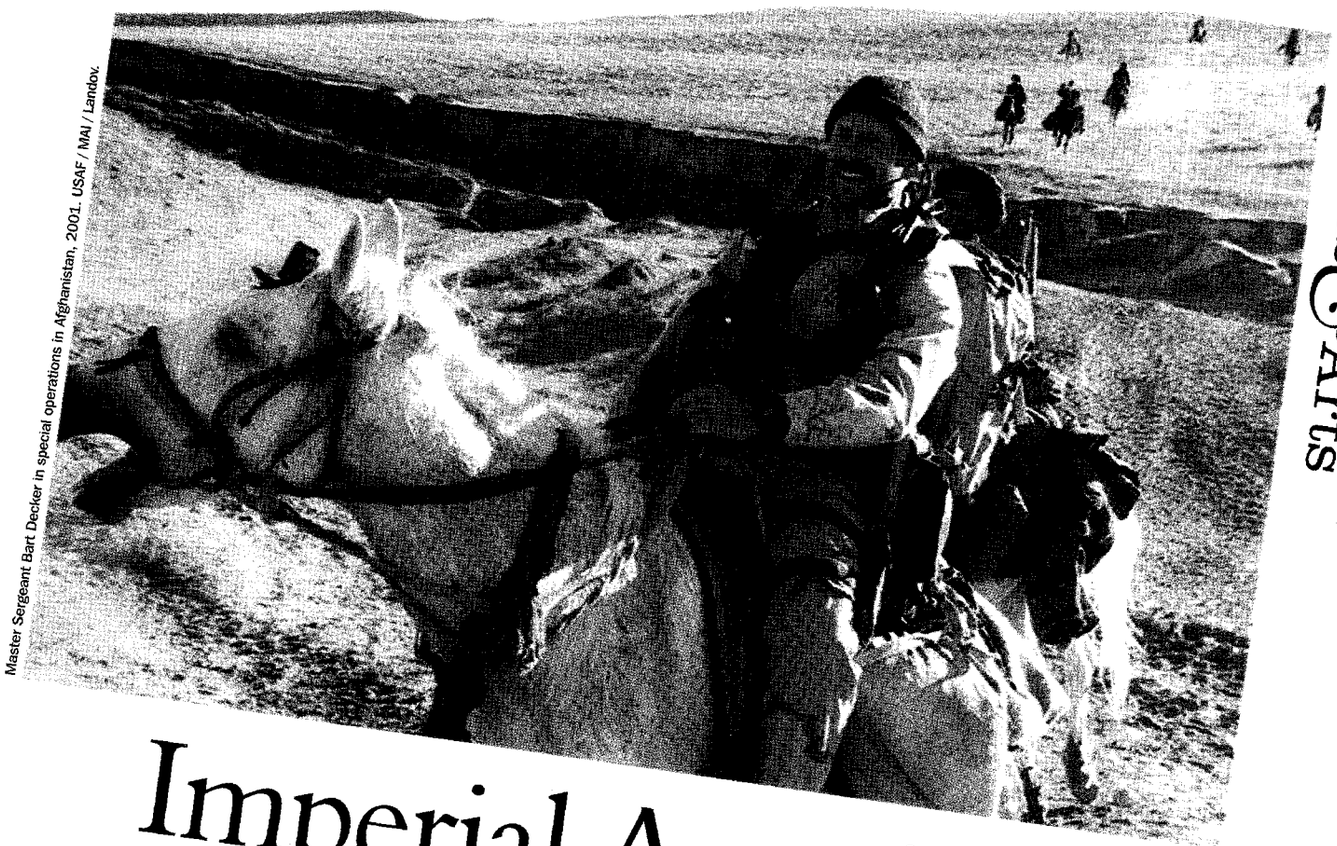
Heifer International's decades of experience and worldwide network of programs earned it top spot in *Forbes's* Gold-Star List of the ten charities most worthy of donor support, a new feature in the magazine's 2004 Investment Guide.

Visit us at **www.heifer.org,** and learn how easy it is to give a gift of lasting livelihood and true independence.

HEIFER® INTERNATIONAL

Images at top, bottom left, and bottom right by Darcy Kiefel; bottom center by Matt Bradley. All contents © Heifer International

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Master Sergeant Bart Decker in special operations in Afghanistan, 2001. USAF / MAI / Landov.

Imperial America?

The paranoid tradition in European thought

By Roger Kaplan

According to Emmanuel Todd, a French demographer with a degree in anthropology from Cambridge University, America is "a problem for the rest of the world"—a nation that was an indispensable bulwark of political freedom and international order for decades, but now causes "international disorder by maintaining where it can uncertainty and conflict."

The United States is, Todd informs us in *After the Empire*, required to play the bully because of its economic dependence on the rest of the world. America's provocations can be active (when it intervenes militarily overseas with levels of force out of all proportion to what is necessary, as in Afghanistan or Iraq) or passive (when it "refuses to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian question" though "it clearly has the power to do so"). But the United States needs a permanent state of conflict, a "universal terrorist threat." As Todd writes, "The elevation of terrorism into a universal force institutionalizes a permanent state of war across the globe—a fourth 'World War' according to certain American authors who see nothing ridiculous about considering the Cold War as the third."

After the Empire
The Breakdown of the American Order
by Emmanuel Todd
Columbia University Press, 192 pp., $29.95

Well now. According to Todd, the United States has a right to pursue al Qaeda (even if, as he believes, it was American hostility to Islam that caused the mentally unbalanced, lost youths in Osama's band to launch their attacks on New York and Washington), but only if it does so in a reasonable and moderate way. The unreasonable and immoderate strategy that the United States has chosen is the surest mark that it has, collectively and in its leadership, lost its marbles.

But the *reductio ad non compos mentis* is only part of the story. Trained as a social scientist, Todd cannot be satisfied with the idea that there may be a few crazies running the United States. Something more world-historical must be in the works—and, sure enough, the United States since the collapse of the Soviet Union has gone from being a benign giant to a malign and increasingly unhinged giant: "American society is changing into a fundamentally unegalitarian system of domination." In short, America is dangerous not because it is powerful, but because it is weak and rapidly getting weaker.

Roger Kaplan is author of Conservative Socialism: The Decline of Radicalism and the Triumph of the Left in France.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

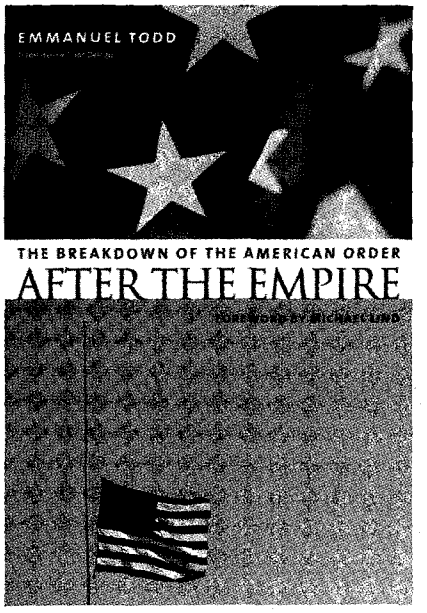
Todd's *After the Empire* was a best-seller in France when it was published just before the Iraq war, and now it is available in English, with an afterword to account for that event, as well as a foreword by Michael Lind. Before the invasion of Iraq got underway, Todd had considered the United States Army hopelessly inept, overweight, overage, and forced to rely on video-game tactics because of the semi-literacy of its personnel. The actual war for Iraq did not give him any reasons to modify his assessment.

Todd apparently—it is sometimes hard to be sure just what he is saying between rants about "castrating women" and "Jewish lobbies" and Americans who regard Arabs as sub-human—intends to give a coherent structure to a process of decline in *After the Empire*. "At the very moment when the world is discovering democracy and learning to get along politically without the United States, the United States is losing its democratic characteristics and discovering that it cannot get along without the rest of the world."

This will be of interest to the vast majority of Americans, whose view of the "rest of the world" is, not without reason, that it represents a burden that the Lord will not let us walk away from. Todd, however, considers that the United States cannot survive economically and otherwise without resorting to a global protection racket. But the country does not have the muscle; the United States "simply does not have what it takes to be a true empire." The American empire is not strong enough militarily to "maintain the current level of exploitation of the planet." Moreover, "its ideological universalism is in decline," so it no longer leads and inspires.

Although he can be coy, asserting that capitalism is the only viable economic system, the burden of the demonstration of a declining American Empire—not that many Americans were aware there previously was an expanding one—resembles nothing so much as the crude Marxist determinism of the French Communist party. Todd was close to the Communists as a young man and flirted with it in the late 1990s, perhaps out of sheer orneriness, but also because at the time the Communists, like Todd, opposed the European Union. Now Todd favors a strong Europe, allied to Russia, which he thinks is on the way to getting its political and economic acts together and which he views as a protector of Europe from American nuclear blackmail.

Living on over-extended credit in a country hysterically obsessed with security, where the death penalty is increasingly used and racial obsessions



are out of control, Americans, collectively and individually, just cannot cut the imperial figure. The U.S. military appears to be powerful, but that is only because it attacks weak adversaries. The real purpose of "gesticulations" in Afghanistan and Iraq is to impress the Europeans and the Japanese, who must at all costs be kept in the illusion that they either need the United States or should fear it.

To this broad picture of the global situation, Todd adds a curious theoretical gloss based on his theory that rising literacy produces falling birthrates. The good news here is that, together, lower birthrates and rising literacy mean a more liberal, democratic, peaceful environment. The bad news is that along the way, one can expect some confusion: Societies that are rapidly becoming more literate tend to produce distraught young men who can vent their rage by, say, flying airplanes into buildings. But not to worry, it passes.

After the Empire is silly, mean-spirited, and anti-Semitic bile, bigoted to a degree that borders on racist condescension. It is poorly written and foolishly argued. When Todd thinks he has data supporting an argument, he uses them; when he wants to extend the argument to an area where there or inadequate data, he offers sweeping intuitions (Russia's "stability," America's "racial maelstrom"). One wishes, as they say in France, that Todd took the trouble to look in front of his own nose—for in France, the public school system, famous as an engine of "republican integration," is a shambles in poor neighborhoods. This would not, to a researcher trained in empirical social science, necessarily prove anything other than that France is going through a patch of trouble in this area, just as any complicated society does from time to time. But it is from such evidence in other countries that Todd decides America is collapsing into a mad and blind bully.

After the Empire shows all the usual and tired themes of such screeds. There is first of all, as Jean-François Revel showed in last year's *L'Obsession anti-américaine*, an old quarrel of the French (and European) left with the doctrine of liberty. For all its supposed conversion to liberal ideas, the book remains deeply convinced that international trade, to take one of Todd's manic obsessions, is a form of grand larceny.

In a spirited attack on French bigotries, the historian Pierre Rigoulot has shown that sinister references to "Jewish lobbies" now take the place of explicit references to a "mongrel nation" and that sort of thing. Rigoulot, whose *L'Antiaméricanisme* recently was published in France, notes that there is not a canard in the French catalog of American sins that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was not common currency during the Vichy regime on the extreme right and the Cold War coming from the extreme left—including our lousy food, our low cultural level, and, one of Todd's favorites, our inept warriors. The hysterical fear of a "predatory capitalism," a declining United States that cannot fight, failed integration, religious bigotry, and the rest of what Todd seems to think emerged in the late 1990s (presumably because he was pro-American in the 1980s) have been around for ages.

Rigoulot, who is a historian about the same age as Todd and underwent a similar cultural history, refers to anti-Americanism in France as a "ready made" system of thinking, and much of it does indeed seem simply a vulgar form of intellectual sloth. But as Rigoulot also points out, sloth combined with hatred is cause for alarm. French anti-Americanism often, though not always, blends into anti-Semitism, which has become politically acceptable in France in the past few years.

Todd himself manages to put in some condescending words about American Jews' overwrought worrying, and he claims French Jews are far more reasonable about their own situation than Americans make them out to be. The reality, as Michel Gurfinkiel and others have noted, is that the violence directed at Jews and Jewish institutions is at a level unseen since World War II. French Jewish emigration, toward Israel and the United States, is likewise at unprecedented levels. Todd prefers the facile cliché that Israel, with the support of the "neoconservatives who will be the gravediggers of the American empire," has lost sight of its original values. The ultimate cliché within the cliché is that a state that defends its people is abandoning its values.

False social science, fashionable clichés, ill-mannered condescension, ahistorical readings of America's own sense of its international mission, gloating predictions of decline and doom—there is absolutely nothing to recommend this sorry excuse for a book. ♦

Leftover Glamour

The politics of women's magazines.

BY NOEMIE EMERY

Except perhaps for academia, the publishing and entertainment industries are the most left-leaning portions of American culture—as well as the most cheerfully insular and relentlessly smug. And among them sit the women Myrna Blyth calls the "Spin Sisters": an axis of kvetching, pouring tales of woe, victimhood, and the nefarious nature of Republicans into the small, shell-like ears of American women.

Spin Sisters
How the Women of the Media Sell Unhappiness and Liberalism to the Women of America
by Myrna Blyth
St. Martin's, 342 pp., $24.95

From television divas like Katie Couric, Diane Sawyer, and Barbara Walters, to *Vogue*'s Anna Wintour and the other editors of the glossy fashion and food magazines, to the women who produce, write, and star in the four-Kleenex weepies in the movie theaters, they form a friendly circle. The television hostesses celebrate the actresses, while the magazine editors interview the hostesses, and all of them join in a choir to extol as feminine models such people as Hillary Clinton and Anita Hill. Now and then they are forced by circumstance to spotlight some other figures—Elizabeth Dole, Condoleezza Rice, or Lynne Cheney—but it always appears that their hearts are not in it. Somehow or other, they are never named Woman of the Year and never make the list of Women We Love. They are instead Women We Can't Figure Out, women who, despite all their advantages, insist on backing wrong causes.

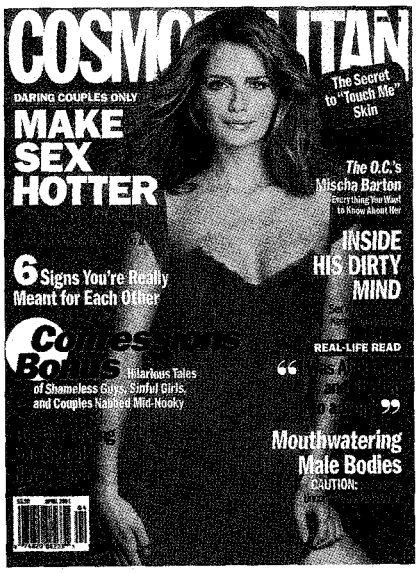
Myrna Blyth spent thirty years in the sisterhood of the women's magazines, rising to become editor of *Ladies' Home Journal*. But now, with the publication of her book *Spin Sisters*, she has become a Benedict Arnold in skirts. Polls show that only about 21 percent of the American public calls itself liberal (as opposed to 43 percent that thinks itself moderate and 33 percent that tilts to the right). In the world of the feminized media, it is more like 99.9 percent. In this world, there is only one kind of political woman, and only one way for a woman to think.

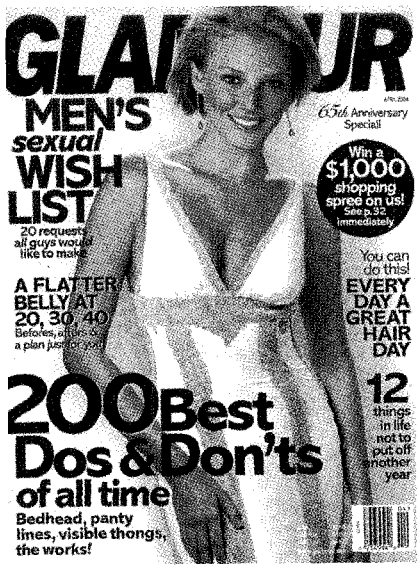
So, for instance, as Blyth points out, the women's magazines all put on their good-government hats during the 2000 election and urged women to get out and vote for their candidates. But they made it clear only one kind of vote was wanted, and that wasn't one for Bush. *Marie Claire*'s get-out-the-vote piece was written by Miramax czar Harvey Weinstein, a fundraiser and friend to the Clintons, who urged a vote for Vice President Gore. *Cosmopolitan*'s was by Christie Brinkley, the ex-model and delegate to the Democratic convention. *Glamour*, perhaps the most egregious, beat the drums for Gore all through the autumn, coming out in September with a dire warning that abortion rights were at stake and quoting Sarah Weddington, the lawyer who argued the *Roe* v. *Wade* case, as urging a vote for the Democrats.

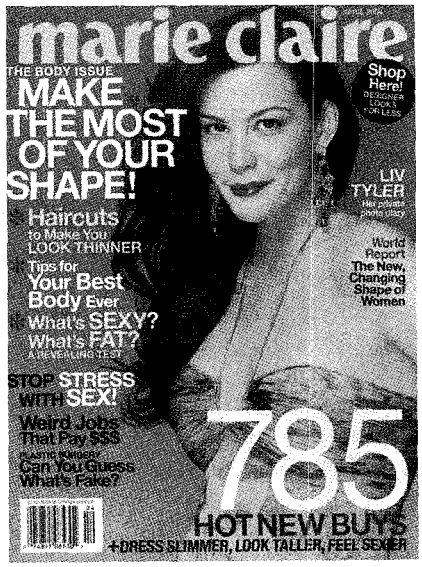
Indeed, *Glamour* "ran a blockbuster combination of anti-Bush features," Blyth writes. It made a special pet of Karenna Gore Schiff, Gore's good-looking but tiresome daughter, and ran a picture of Gore and his daughter together under the statement: "A vote for Gore is a vote for you." After the election, it turned to Karenna again, for advice on "How to Make George W.'s

Noemie Emery is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED







Term a Lot Less Scary." (The answer was that women should donate money to left-leaning and feminist lobbies.)

Of course, women's magazines are always promoting involvement by readers, suggesting organizations and running petitions and websites. But somehow, Blyth notes, those are never on the pro-life or the right-leaning sides. None of this would be objectionable if run in the *Nation* or the *New Republic*; printing opinions is what these magazines do. But, in fact, the *New Republic* publishes much more dissent than *Glamour* does, though the women's magazine presumably speaks to a more diverse audience.

For example, polls show that majorities of white women and married women (presumably the bulk of the magazine's audience) supported the Contract With America and the Republican Congress that came in the 1994 midterm elections. The Spin Sisters, by contrast, went into a spasm: "Listening to the wailing and keening, . . . you'd have thought Lucifer himself had been elected," Blyth says. She recalls a trip to Washington with three other editors, made at the behest of Hillary Clinton, at which they 'proceeded to trash Newt Gingrich and his vote-winning Contract . . . agreeing it was just a dumb PR stunt to lure gullible voters, . . . especially enraged that the Contract endorsed prayer in schools." (They were stunned when their cab driver said he agreed with it, and they concluded the fool had been duped.)

But this is a good example of the respect with which they view a large part of the national public. "We have trouble with religious hicks," an unnamed television producer told Blyth. "We have problems with using hicks. Unless it's after a tornado in a trailer park, and she's crying about the Tupperware blowing away." This attitude informs the content of the morning and magazine television programs, on which Katie, Diane, Barbara, and others express themselves not quite as brashly as *Glamour*, but to much the same end. "Katie does not so much state her views as imply them, with a look, a gesture, or asking tough questions to some, usually conservatives and even moderate Republicans, and tossing softballs to others. . . . Katie makes her likes and dislikes very obvious even if you are watching with only one eye."

Insulated by one another from the world outside and the lives of at least some of their readers, the Spin Sisters live in a state of self-congratulation, in which they endlessly cycle awards. The Matrix Award, for female achievement in media, sponsored by the networks, advertisers, and magazine companies, is a "sold-out spring event at the Waldorf-Astoria." Winners are permitted to pick their presenters, and the pairings tell everything: "During the past few years, Hillary gave Katie Couric her award. Barbara Walters gave Kati Marton, wife of Clintonista Richard Holbrooke, her award. Longtime feminist activist Marlo Thomas handed the prize to Carole Black of Lifetime" (the cable channel that runs endless movies of victimized women).

Meanwhile, Robert Redford gave an award to his publicist. Mary Landrieu gave an award to a woman who helped elect Democrats to the Senate. C.J. Cregg, the fictional press secretary on television's *West Wing*, got a Matrix in one of the show's scripts. Walter Cronkite gave one to Helen Thomas, who thrilled the audience by launching into a Bush-bashing tirade. Though Blyth herself says that she once got a Matrix, back in the days before it got quite so posh (and before she herself was an open conservative), there has been a shut-out since then of women who aren't manifestly liberals.

Apparently conservatives never achieve quite enough, or quite the right sort of achievement, in a round-robin world in which hosts, writers, actors, and activists endlessly interview themselves and one another, plug their movies, campaigns, causes, and programs, and reinforce their own view of society: a world where women are victims, men are the enemy, a government program is the favored solution, and the greatest enemy is the repressive right wing.

This is the view of Spin Sister Gail Collins, a long time contributor to feminist glossies, whose most recent book concerned gossip and scandal, and who now runs the editorial pages of the *New York Times*. Anita Hill and Hillary Clinton are their main heroines, as their stories have everything: ambi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion, sex, suffering, and persecution by nasty conservatives. Hillary Clinton—she gives it all up for a lout who betrays her, and still becomes senator!—is the greatest Lifetime movie of all time.

Blyth doesn't object to these people having opinions or even expressing them. She objects to dishing out these opinions in venues that address a general audience under the pretense of being objective, where differing views are seldom permitted or even acknowledged as real. She invokes the chasm that exists between these media stars and their audience, who on numerous subjects are far more Republican, far more religious, and far more pro-life. In fact, in the period in which the spin sisters (and brothers) have been most aggressive—say, 1980, up to the present—conservatives have been making gains.

This state of affairs suggests two different analyses: the first, that there is potentially a much greater store of conservative sentiment that is now undermined by this kind of press bias; and the second, that the "opinion-leaders" are not very good at leading opinion, and that their power is less than is feared. From the 1930s to the early 1960s, Hollywood, radio, and other parts of the media reflected the social and political mood of the country. But since then the media have been turning against it. As a result, some people have tuned out parts of the media (the networks seem to be losing millions of viewers). Others still read and watch, but no longer believe it (press credibility also has suffered). And yet others watch and read, but simply ignore the political message, having factored the biases in.

After all its heavy lifting on behalf of Al Gore and his daughter for many months before the 2000 elections, *Glamour* took a poll and found that its readers evenly split for Al Gore and George Bush, correctly reflecting the split in the country. Perhaps *Glamour*'s readers—all younger women—were really in the beginning in favor of Bush, and had their minds realigned by the magazine's hysterics. More likely, the sisters were spinning their wheels. ♦

Lonigan Redux

The return of James T. Farrell.

BY CORTRIGHT MCMEEL

What happened to James T. Farrell? Once considered one of America's most promising writers, Chicago's favorite son was for a time the odds-on favorite to follow Faulkner, Hemingway, and Steinbeck on the road to literary immortality. But by the time he turned sixty, his books had stopped selling and the critics had moved on. Since his death in 1979 Farrell has been little more than a footnote, relegated to the literary backwaters—yet another writer whose name is known in English departments but whose books are seldom read.

Studs Lonigan
A Trilogy: Young Lonigan/ The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan/Judgment Day
by James T. Farrell
Library of America, 988 pp., $35

An Honest Writer
The Life and Times of James T. Farrell
by Robert K. Landers
Encounter, 562 pp., $28.95

The appearance of Farrell's masterpiece, the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy, on the Modern Library's millennial list of the "Best 100 Novels of the Century" was thus a surprise—and though that list was much derided, it nonetheless signaled something of a revival for the author. And now the Library of America's reprint of the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy and a new biography, Robert K. Landers's *An Honest Writer: The Life and Times of James T. Farrell*, make the case that he deserves not only a critical reappraisal but that rarest of contemporary literary prizes: a popular readership.

Big and brawling with a hard-hitting, exorbitant prose that wavers between the awkwardly prolix and the genuinely compelling, the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy—*Young Lonigan* (1932), *The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan* (1934), and *Judgment Day* (1935)—is typical of the James T. Farrell literary experience.

Cortright McMeel is a writer in Baltimore.

The trilogy chronicles the life of a young man growing up in an Irish family on Chicago's South Side from before World War I to Studs's death during the Depression. Farrell was consumed with portraying Chicago's streets in those days. Alongside fleeting moments of young love and idyllic scenes of playing football, Studs Lonigan makes his way through a city that frequently seems an American *Inferno*: smoky pool halls filled with prostitutes; city sidewalks rife with gang wars and race riots; even a brothel where rape, brutality, and venereal disease are featured.

It cannot be said that no tenderness exists in Farrell's trilogy. Indeed, the early scenes of Studs's first love and, later, his longing for the "one true girl," Lucy, make for heartbreaking stuff. Lucy is an unobtainable girl of the lace-curtain Irish, a woman who moves beyond Studs's social class and romantic hopes. But the world of Studs Lonigan is soaked in booze and blood. In one scene in *Judgment Day*, the third and strongest novel in the trilogy, Studs goes to the race track after having a spat with his fiancée. There he encounters a married woman who has had a bad day at the races. Along with three other men, Studs accompanies the woman back to her apartment, where she turns tricks to recoup her losses. Such starkness incurred the wrath of critics both high-brow and commercial. Edmund Wilson dismissed Farrell, declaring his characters were "unreflecting and limited people," while Henry Seidel Canby of the popular *Saturday Review* called Farrell "unbearably brutal."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The greatest strengths of *Studs Lonigan* are inextricably entwined with its weaknesses. Farrell is like a documentary filmmaker who can't bring himself to cut or even organize the hours upon hours of footage he's amassed. The reader confronts an unending parade of characters: soliloquizing Catholic priests, flippant thugs, crooked policemen, pool hall brawlers, Jewish bookies, corrupt politicians, seedy stockbrokers, drunken house painters, nosy soda jerks—all rendered in the colloquial lingo of Farrell's universe. Bent on including everyone in the vast fabric of that time and place, Farrell sacrifices plot and taut narrative drive for completeness. In doing so, he gave American literature a huge unwieldy opus that, despite its flaws, seems to demand entrance into the canon in much the same way that Studs Lonigan demanded entrance into the bordello: with a swagger and a sneer.

Robert K. Landers's biography of James T. Farrell offers a vivid portrait of a conflicted artist who throughout his life seemed to be caught between two worlds. At the age of two, young James was given to his mother's parents, the Dalys, for safekeeping. Farrell's father, Jim Farrell, was a Chicago teamster who could not afford a proper home for his three children, so James was taken to the Grand Boulevard community where the Dalys lived, a safe, pleasant, middle-class community, four miles south of the Loop. It was here in this conventional middle-class home that James T. Farrell would develop the anti-bourgeoisie impulse that led him to embrace the colorful Irish neighborhood of his birth.

It did not take Farrell long to romanticize these working-class roots. Soon after entering college he began espousing revolutionary politics. In *An Honest Writer*, Landers gives a moving sketch of Farrell's intellectual awakening in his first year at the University of Chicago. After an English course exposed him to modern writing, Farrell later said, "I overturned all of the values of my boyhood and became a very rebellious young man. As I did, I came to the conclusion that I did not want to be a success in the usual terms: I did not want to be a Babbitt."

Before long, Farrell was publishing short stories and articles that featured his signature topic: the harsh, unforgiving landscape of the Irish experience of the South Side. In 1932 Vanguard Press published the first installment of the Studs Lonigan trilogy, *Young Lonigan*. At this point, Landers's biography picks up the pace and shows a Farrell caught up in his passions, politics, and literature.

A Trotskyite, Farrell battled more against his fellow leftists than with any capitalists. He let his books of urban desolation, featuring the squalor of the working class, the cultural ignorance of the middle class, and the amorality of the rich, speak for themselves. He viewed his body of work as a Socialist attack on conservative values. But he was far more unforgiving of his leftist comrades from whom he expected more. After Trotsky's flight from the Soviet Union, Farrell took a visceral stance against Stalin. His glowing review of Max Shactman's pamphlet *Behind the Moscow Trial*, which made a case for Trotsky's innocence while illuminating Stalin's Machiavellian manipulations of the proceedings, made Farrell numerous enemies among American Communist intellectuals and writers.

Encounter Books

James T. Farrell

Farrell made matters worse by having a few too many drinks and threatening Stalin's apologists at cocktail parties. As described by Farrell himself when he confronted Communist and cultural commissar Alexander Trachtenberg: "I got Tracty and shook my fist under his nose and taunted him and other Stalinists there, [daring them] to call me a careerist, a person not to be trusted, a derelict etc. to my face."

As a result, the books he published after the Moscow trials, *No Star Is Lost* (1938), *Father and Son* (1940), and *My Days of Anger* (1943), were panned on two fronts. The more conservative critic Van Wyck Brooks wrote that Farrell and other Socialist authors seemed "to delight in kicking their world to pieces, as if civilization were all a pretense and everything noble a humbug." Meanwhile, on the left, Nelson Algren was joined by others who were even less complimentary, maligning Farrell's verbose writing style and his repetitive use of the Irish-American urban experience.

Farrell was not without powerful literary allies. H.L. Mencken came to Farrell's defense in his inimitable no-nonsense way: "Wonderful stuff in those Chicago tales . . . whoever doesn't like Farrell is an idiot or a liar. Farrell refused to go along with Stalin's boys, and as a critic he took a fall out of new authors they were bringing up. So they ganged him."

Landers handles the final episodes of Farrell's life with sensitivity and respect, revealing the author's long, slow slide into obscurity. His literary agent, Sterling Lord, dropped him, as much for his cocktail-party shenanigans and paranoid behavior as for his declining literary influence. With his personal life in shambles, having two failed marriages behind him, Farrell became increasingly dependent upon amphetamines. But he never stopped writing, publishing his last novel, *The Death of Nora Ryan* (1978), at the age of seventy-four, one year before his death.

James T. Farrell was a writer for whom the creative process was not so much art as act of will. Despite his matter-of-fact prose style, the energy and depth with which he delineated the experiences of his youth invested his novels with a cumulative power. Never bowing to public opinion or popular sentiment, Farrell was a writer with unyielding passion, an author who fought to write one true story. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Get 400 issues FREE

If you're a subscriber...don't miss out!

Make sure you're a registered subscriber—and you'll see what you've been missing!

It takes just a few seconds. Just go to weeklystandard.com and you'll immediately see how easy it is. All you'll need to do is choose a password.

Once you're registered, you'll be able to read each issue of the magazine in an Adobe PDF format. You can also read individual magazine articles in text format. And you can browse back issues of The Weekly Standard—more than 300 of them! All are in our online archive.

Register now...GO to weeklystandard.com

the weekly Standard

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

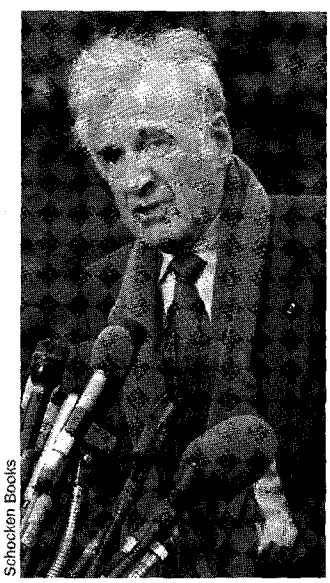
Wiesel's Masters

Portraits of Jewish Sages.

BY JAY D. HOMNICK

Elie Wiesel always held the respect of my peers as a chronicler of Jewish agony when I was a young Yeshiva student. The mopiest of my classmates loved to punctuate bouts of self-pity with a passage from Wiesel's *Night*: "Suicide is not the answer. There is no answer." Yet, to suggest that he might offer a valuable perspective to the study of Jewish texts—legal, philosophical, ideological—would have been dismissed with a guffaw.

We may have been wrong. In *Wise Men and Their Tales*, Wiesel grants us an acquaintance with the great thinkers of Jewish history. The first half of the book explores Biblical figures. These characters—familiar well beyond Jewish parochial precincts—have captivated the imaginations of untold billions. Still, they yield new dimensions when viewed under Wiesel's microscope. Take the story of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, and Ishmael. The conflict between Isaac and Ishmael has never been fully resolved, the author notes. Israel and the Arab world seem doomed to continue hashing out the resentments of Ishmael's abrupt expulsion.



Schocken Books

Wise Men and Their Tales
Portraits of Biblical, Talmudic, and Hasidic Masters
by Elie Wiesel
Schocken, 336 pp., $26

Wiesel locates the rebelliousness and pride of Hagar in the Talmudic tradition that her father was pharaoh, then fleshes out the conflict between high birth and low station in the servant princess. The character of Sarah is vested with nuance as we trace her desire to please her husband, to bear children for his sake and the sake of Jewish destiny. When loss of personal dignity becomes the price for importing the surrogate child, she bristles, and the seeds of an intricate historical schism are sown.

This is covered with admirable thoroughness. Wiesel even quotes the remarkable Midrash that interprets Balaam's prophecy as predicting that the final clash of the Jews in history will be with the Arabs, who come armed with Ishmael's godly component. I would only append to that discussion the equally prescient seventh verse of Psalm 120, which is interpreted by the classic commentator Rashi to mean: "I am at peace (with the Arabs), but when I speak (of formalizing the peace in a treaty), then they go to war."

Rashi's role as commentator to both scripture and the Talmud is the subject of a special introduction in *Wise Men and Their Tales*. It includes the delightful tidbit that Nicholas de Lyre, an early fourteenth-century priest, quoted Rashi so often that his colleagues berated him as Simius Solomonis—the ape of Solomon (Rashi's first name). Wiesel rhapsodizes, "His commentary is never an end but a beginning, an eternal beginning. It begs for more, always more. Thus the student, the reader becomes his associate, his fellow seeker. Together they go deeper and deeper into the secret workings of seemingly simple words."

Approaching Talmudic figures, he is no less inquisitive. His disquisition on the career of the versatile Rabbi Yehoshua ben-Levi is a gem, citing Longfellow's beautiful poem about this fascinating figure who bridged the Mishnaic and Talmudic eras. Rabbi ben-Levi was a master of law as well as theology and history. He prescribed Torah as a medicine for all physical ailments—yet, he risked his life to minister to the quarantined bearers of contagious diseases.

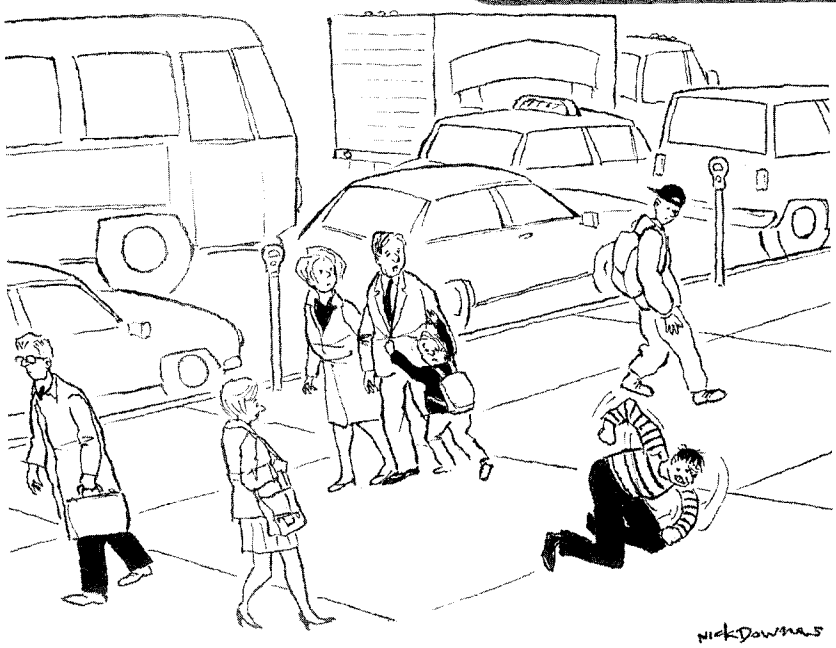
Wiesel leaves us to ponder the offbeat Talmudic tale where Elijah the Prophet introduces ben-Levi to the messiah. The Rabbi asked, "When will you redeem us?" The Messiah answered, "Today." The rabbi reported to Elijah, "He lied to me." No, explained Elijah, he meant, "Today, if everyone mends their ways."

Simon Wiesenthal, in his memoir, mentions "a Rabbi Silver" who visited the camps after the Holocaust, distributing money and encouraging people to reclaim their Jewish observance. Wiesenthal had received no religious training, but he picked a fight, anyway, proclaiming his disgust for a man who had smuggled a prayer book into Auschwitz and sold a page per day for an extra ration. The rabbi was Eliezer Silver of Cincinnati, a major Talmudic scholar and a supporter of Republicans. And Silver answered Wiesenthal, "Why look at the one scoundrel selling the pages? Why not look at the many heroes who were willing to forgo a meal in extreme hunger, just for a single page of prayer?"

Elie Wiesel looks to have arrived after his long search, getting beyond the lost rations to the treasured pages. Perhaps there is an answer after all. The answer is life. The life of the heart and, yes, the life of the mind. ♦

Jay D. Homnick is a columnist for JewishWorldReview.com *and author of several books in Hebrew on scripture and the Talmud.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"That's one angry mime!"

Books in Brief

***The Best Poems of the English Language: From Chaucer through Frost*, edited by Harold Bloom (HarperCollins, 984 pp., $34.95).** Who would have thought the old oracle had so much obviousness in him? Harold Bloom has now produced *The Best Poems of the English Language*, a door-stopper anthology of such unneglected classics as Wyatt's "Whoso List to Hunt," Raleigh's "Answer to Marlowe," Shakespeare's best-known sonnets, Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress," Milton's "Lycidas," Gray's "Elegy," Blake's "The Tyger," Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey," Tennyson's "The Eagle," Browning's "My Last Duchess," Frost's "Design," and Eliot's "The Waste Land."

Don't get me wrong: These are some of my favorites, too. But do we really need all this help to remind us of them? When it comes to fresh discoveries or stimulating reappraisals, there are no surprises in *The Best Poems of the English Language*—not even in the windy pronunciamentos, great bags of vatic gas, and gusts of willfully obscure diction with which Bloom fills his introductions to the poets in this anthology. Readers enter Bloom country at their own risk. If you're not inclined toward the sesquipedalian, or egregiously fond of Kabbala or gnosticism or Thulean hermeneutics (I made that last one up), then you'd be better off saving your $34.95 before you find yourself with the sort of headache Bloom claims to get from reading Emily Dickinson.

The Best Poems of the English Language is really two books: unexceptionable examples of verse, and Harold Bloom's commentary on "the visionary" and "strangeness" and "the anxiety of influence." Readers will find a collection of comically bland approvals (of Hardy and Robinson and other fine poets—all of whom deserve better) relieved by impenetrable essays on Bloom's favorites (Blake, Shelley, Yeats). But what could possibly account for eight-and-a-half pages on William Carlos Williams, or eight on Marianne Moore, when Robert Frost is accorded one?

Curious opinions decorate this book. John Ashbery is "the greatest living American poet." Well, it's a free country, and Bloom is, I suppose, entitled to this kind of proclamation. But does he even read his own papal bulls? We are told that Tennyson, for example, is "the most accomplished artist of all English poets since Milton and Pope." But wait! A few pages later, Browning is "the most considerable poet in English since the major Romantics, surpassing his great contemporary rival Tennyson."

There is occasionally something to admire in the prose annoying these poems. Bloom thinks the Oxfordians were "lunatic legions," so he can't be all nutty, and his denunciations of modern poetry's School of Resentment deserve endless praise. But even Bloom's courageous struggle against nonaesthetic principles of literary judgment in today's academy fall victim to his enthusiasms when the afflatus is upon him. Smack in the middle of kind words on Pope's "Epistle to Augustus," Bloom opines that this satirical poem is "as applicable to President George W. Bush's repose as it was to George II's." Did the great Victorian anthologist Francis Palgrave ever lash into Disraeli with such unfairmindedness?

And then Bloom declares, "Personally all but selfless, invariably benevolent, Shelley was also gentle, urbane, and by most accounts the most lovable of human beings." *Most* accounts? Bloom's sole witness turns out to be Byron. Now there's a fine pair to stand up for each other. In the sordid betrayals, desertions, adulteries, and incests these two poets inflicted on their wives, mistresses, sisters, and other relations—not to mention some really poor judgment about boating—you can't find a better chronicle of the temptations "visionaries" like Shelley are drawn to and ruined by.

For your children in high school, buy any of a dozen other anthologies of standard English verse. The book will have two advantages over *The Best Poems of the English Language*: the same poems, and different prose.

—Len Krisak

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Parody

"As I dressed to go back in, I wondered again how many Al Qaeda sleeper cells there were in the United States. . . .Were those cells still planning more attacks?. . .I had to get back to the White House and begin planning to prevent follow-on attacks. I found my Secret Service-issued .357 sidearm, thrust it in my belt, and went back out into the night, back to the West Wing."

—Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror*, pp. 29-30

Sid—
Here's the first part of my sequel for the folks at Free Press. Let's milk this baby!
—Dick

D R A F T

Against All Enemies, Part II:
More Tales from My Personal War on Terror

By Richard A. Clarke

CHAPTER 1: AN ARMY OF ONE

It was a dark and stormy night as I slaved over the creaky keyboard, writing another desperate memo. I was grateful that my hard drive was protected from terrorist cyber-attack by state-of-the-art software, which I demanded that President Clinton install on my laptop PC during a top-level meeting in 1999—one of many tête-à-têtes with the president (or "Mr. Bill," as he insisted I address him). Those were the halcyon days of my crusade against al Qaeda—an era when the president would not dare make a decision about terrorism without first asking, "What would Dick Clarke do?"

Those days faded quickly to black when George W. Bush was appointed president. It's a reflection of my integrity and commitment to serving my country that I didn't resign immediately when the DCI took over my regular briefings of the president. Despite the emasculating effect of the career downgrade, I held no grudge, felt no bitterness, was not haunted by the nagging feeling that I was smarter than all of my superiors, especially National Security Adviser Condi Rice. I simply gave 110 percent to my new role, which was to sound the alarm over cyber-terror and install anti-virus software on each White House PC.

After 9/11 I couldn't help feeling that if I had been president, or even if Mr. Bill could have had a third term, the WTC towers would still be standing. More than ever, I knew that I was a marked man, the greatest threat to al Qaeda in the Western hemisphere. I knew bin Laden slept fitfully in his cave as the name Dick Clarke stabbed at his mind like a shimmering scimitar.

I fired off yet another memo to Rice, begging for five minutes of the president's time. My note carried detailed plans for dismantling al Qaeda . . . plans which would, tragically, never reach the president's desk.

Then I thrust my Secret Service-issued .357 widow-maker into my belt, and went back out into the night to haunt the mean streets of Georgetown, fearing that my brilliance was destined to be cloaked in shadow, unrecognized and unappreciated, until the release of my blockbuster bestseller during the 2004 election season.

Stopping by my office, I saw the door ajar. Condi needed me again, I

the weekly Standard
April 5, 2004

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cutting-Edge Comm[illegible]ic Policy

POLICY REVIEW

SUBSCRIBE
Receive six bi-monthly issues for only $36 a year.

FREE ISSUE
Receive a complimentary issue of the latest Policy Review without obligation.

Call 877.558.3727 or visit www.policyreview.org

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

In the new issue of Policy Review:

Power and Population in Asia

Aging Asia: an uneven burden?

Between 2000 and 2025 China's median age is set to rise very substantially: from about 30 to around 39. According to UNPD projections for 2025, in fact, China's median age will be higher than America's. The impending tempo of population aging in China is very nearly as rapid as anything history has yet seen. It will be far faster than what was recorded in the more developed regions over the past three decades and is exceeded only by Japan. There is a crucial difference, however, between Japan's recent past and China's prospective future. To put the matter bluntly, **Japan became rich before it became old; China will do things the other way around.** When Japan had the same proportion of population 65 and older as does China today (2000), its level of per capita output was three times higher than China's is now. In 2025, 13.4 percent of China's population is projected to be 65-plus; when Japan crossed the 13.4 percent threshold, its per capita GDP was approaching $20,000 a year (constant 1990 PPP dollars). One need not be a "Sino-pessimist" to suggest that China will be nowhere near that same economic marker 22 years from now.

—Nicholas Eberstadt

Burgers, Fries, and Lawyers

Why is fast food under attack?

He squeezes a Cubs pennant in his left hand while shoving a mustard-smeared hot dog into his mouth with the right. The Dodgers have a runner on first, who is sneaking a big lead off the base. The Cubs' pitcher has thrown three balls and two strikes to the batter, a notorious power hitter. The obese fan holds his breath while the pitcher winds up and fires a blazing fastball. "Crack!" The ball flies over the fan's head into the bleachers for a game-winning home run. **The fan slumps to his bleacher seat and has a heart attack. Whom should the fan sue?** (a) The Cubs for breaking his heart? (b) The hot dog company for making a fatty food? (c) The hot dog vendor for selling him a fatty food? (d) All of the above

—Todd G. Buchholz

To read more, call 877.558.3727 for a free copy of the latest Policy Review.

HOOVER INSTITUTION

. . . ideas defining a free society

Hoover Institution Stanford University Stanford, CA 94305-6010 Tel: 877.466.8374 Fax: 650.723.1687 info@hoover.stanford.edu www.hoover.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In The Definitive Hours Of America Votes 2004 Coverage

AMERICA TURNS TO CNN

★ #1 On Super Tuesday!

During primetime on March 2, CNN delivered the largest audience in cable news

★ #1 On Key Primary Nights!

From 9-11pm on the five key primary nights, CNN delivered more viewers than any other cable news network

★ 42% Audience Growth!

On key primary nights CNN had the highest audience growth in cable news vs. 4th quarter 2003

★ 3 Out Of Top 4 Debates!

This political season, CNN had three of the highest-rated debates among P25-54

AMERICA VOTES 2004: THE RACE IS ON!

CNN®

THE MOST TRUSTED NAME IN NEWS

Source: Nielsen Media Research: Super Tuesday 3/2/04, Based on P2+; Key Primary Dates: Jan. 19, Jan 27, Feb. 3, Feb. 17 and Mar. 2, Based on P2+; Audience growth based on Prime 8-11p Key Primary Dates vs. Q4 '03, Based on P2+; Political Season (9/9/03 - 2/26/04) Democratic Debates: Feb. '04, Oct. '03, Nov. '03; Based on P25-54. Subject to qualification, available upon request.

© 2004 Cable News Network. A Time Warner Company. All Rights Reserved.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED